



Newsletter

February 2026

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 women, including ethnically diverse, differently abled, and those self-identifying as transgender or non-binary. We are committed to encompassing greater gender diversity in our membership, practices, social justice actions and in the terminology that we use.

SWAN NEWS Notice

CONTRIBUTION END DATES for 2026:

So that you receive the NEWS on the first day of each month, the deadline date for 2026 will be the 25th of the month. For example, February 25th for March's newsletter, March 25th for April's newsletter, and so on - through to November 25th for December's newsletter.

DIARY DATES:

To keep you informed on what's happening in our area, check out Diary Dates near the end of this newsletter.

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's 30TH YEAR is here!

SWAN's 30th year - will be a year to remember!

Plans to celebrate SWAN's 30th Anniversary are now well underway. With the festive season behind us, working group members are dedicating their time to writing an anniversary edition of '*When Women Meet*'; overseeing the creation of a portrait exhibition of SWAN members across the generations; and guiding the development of a short video to showcase the unique and valuable contribution of SWAN within our region.

As well as promoting women's active involvement in our own community, we hope our efforts will encourage women in other areas to realise that, together with like-minded peers, they too can make a difference.

As reported in our December newsletter, this year we will host an inspiring array of notable guest speakers. First up, on **Sunday 15 February, Kirsty Sword Gusmao AO, the former First Lady of Timor Leste**, will address a SWAN meeting (see the Meeting Flyer below for details). Kirsty has had a long association with the Mornington Peninsula and was instrumental in establishing '**Friends of Lospalos**', a friendship relationship between the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council and the Timorese sub-district of Lospalos. From 2000, for 25 years, this partnership provided much needed solidarity and financial support to this Timorese community, as well as reciprocal benefits to our region, by way of awareness raising and connection.

The guest speaker for our **International Women's Day (IWD) Meeting on Sunday 15 March is Mary Crooks AO, who recently retired as the long-term Executive Director of the Victorian Women's Trust**. Mary is a dedicated feminist leader - never afraid to speak truth to power, who has championed women's rights for decades. Information about her and the topic she will address will be provided in the March edition of SWAN NEWS.

Another important date for your diary is **Sunday 24 May**. Instead of our holding our regular bimonthly meeting, SWAN is hosting a **30th Anniversary Lunch at Safety Beach Life Saving Club**. Our Keynote Speaker on this occasion will be the **Victoria's Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner Ro Allen**. Ro brings more than 25 years of experience in community services, governance and social justice. Stay tuned for details of this very special event that we will send to you shortly.

This year we will also be hosting a series of information sessions at local libraries and in other community venues. These sessions will be facilitated by SWAN members and will include our video presentation followed by a Q&A. This is a great opportunity for us to share information about our current informal gatherings, educational and advocacy initiatives and discuss how audience participants can become involved.

As you can imagine, all this is a lot of work! **We are calling on members to volunteer to assist.** If you've got acting, poetic or musical skills we need your help. There are roles for those with facilitation, public speaking, networking and promotional skills, as well as those gifted with talents in hospitality and catering, and especially, in graphic

design. There are many other ways to be involved. Please let us know what you can share. All offers welcomed. Contact: swanwomen@outlook.com

SWAN Special Speaker Event

SWAN is very fortunate to engage Kirsty Sword Gusmao AO to share her knowledge and advocacy
- coming soon on SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY - SWAN's first speaker event for 2026!



Kirsty Sword Gusmão AO

'The Unstoppable Power of Women's Solidarity'

Kirsty Sword Gusmão AO grew up in regional Victoria, going on to engage in **human rights work for the East Timorese independence movement** and marry resistance leader **Xanana Gusmão** who in 2002 became first President of the newly independent Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. In 2007, then President José Ramos-Horta appointed Kirsty as **Goodwill Ambassador for Education**.

She is a strong advocate for promoting traditional knowledge systems and languages in her adopted country and currently supports the Timor-Leste Ministry of Education on a range of initiatives aimed at enhancing inclusion at the early childhood and basic education levels.

Kirsty will share her personal journey from activist and human rights campaigner to **First Lady of Timor-Leste**. She will talk about her role as **Founding Director and current Chair of the Aloia Foundation** that promotes the rights of Timorese women, aims to increase their leadership capacity and improve the health and education of women and children. Kirsty will also speak about her ongoing commitment to support the self-determination of Australia's First Peoples, referencing her work with **Woor-Dungin, a not-for-profit organisation** that promotes partnership between philanthropists and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

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

SWAN thanks our raffle sponsors for their generous donations:

2 Left Sisters Cafe - Mornington

Farrells Bookshop - Mornington

9:30 AM | SUNDAY 15 | FEB | 2026



Thanks to Secret Garden for donating the beautiful flowers for our guest speaker



southernwomensactionnetwork



www.swanwomen.org.au



spwswan



SWAN COMMITTEE XMAS GET-TOGETHER, Blue Mini Café, Rosebud, December 2025

After an intense 2.5 hour Committee Meeting reviewing our efforts, challenges and contributions during 2025 as well as planning for the future, we celebrated with a delicious lunch (individually purchased). The SWAN Committee are all volunteers and meet regularly six times a year at Mt Martha House, with additional meetings as required.

L-R: Ros Beard, Diane McDonald, Mechelle Cheers, Jill Warner, Monica Coyle, Susan Hillman Stoltz, Marilyn Hoban, Moz Lucas, Lyn Jones, Beck Cridland. Photo: Supplied

SWAN Showcased in ACNC Report

A message from SWAN's Facilitator Diane McDonald:

'A few months ago I made contact with a former work colleague, **Rachel Smith, who is now the Director of Advice Services, Education and Public Affairs at the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission**. Amongst other things, I told her about SWAN and our core objectives, gave her a broad overview our activities, and explained our plans for celebrating our 30th anniversary next year.

In her role, Rachel has a good understanding of the wide range of organisations that have been accredited as charities by ACNC. **She was clearly impressed with SWAN's focus, our way of working and its longevity as a volunteer-led community organisation run by women. She asked if she might incorporate SWAN as one of two Case Studies that she wanted to include in the ACNC Annual 2025**, placing it in a special companion chapter about the important contribution made by volunteer-run charities.

I willingly agreed and prepared a short document based on Rachel's criteria. This contribution has now been **showcased in the 'Australian Charities Commission Report – 11th edition' in a section entitled: 'Volunteer-run charities are the quiet achievers of Australia's charity sector'**.

Attached is a link to the report where you can find the SWAN Case Study. I trust I've done justice to who we are and all we do.'

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/reports/charity-numbers-volunteer-effect>

A MESSAGE TO MEMBERS

We would really appreciate if SWAN members could go to the SWAN Instagram and Facebook sites and Like and/or Comment on the postings.

We need to let others know we are serious and are being heard.

Every extra Like and Comment will help us in pressing our cases for advocacy and action as well as promoting how SWAN is a place of connection and friendship for like-minded women.

POTENTIAL SWAN MULTICULTURAL WORKING GROUP

A meeting is being held on **Thursday 12 February at 11am** to discuss the potential for a SWAN MULTICULTURAL GROUP. The focus of the group is currently in development stage and will include:

- Developing a multicultural peer support and social network
- Collaborating with MPS Council for the reduction of racism
- Strategising for anti-racism advocacy and action where appropriate

Interested SWAN members are welcome to attend this meeting. RSVP (email only) for meeting venue - val.campbell72@gmail.com

SWAN Women Against Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is often an isolating experience, encompassing psychological, physical, emotional, sexual, and/or financial abuse, happening behind closed doors, in homes, in workplaces, in public spaces, and across all ethnic and socio-economic groups.

The Women Against Gendered Violence group urge all SWAN women to read and sign the **FAIR AGENDA PETITION** which calls on the government to do more to increase gender equity and for the elimination of violence. The call is for all governments across Australia to act in these 6 areas:

1. IMPROVING WOMEN'S SAFETY AND WELLBEING - AND TREATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AS A TRUE NATIONAL PRIORITY
2. UPHOLDING AND ADVANCING WOMEN'S HEALTH, AND ACCESS TO SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTHCARE
3. VALUING CARE, AND REMOVING BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY
4. UPHOLDING SELF-DETERMINATION AND AGENCY FOR ALL
5. ACTING FOR A SAFER CLIMATE
6. CONTRIBUTING TO A BETTER FUTURE IN OUR REGION

MORE INFO and to SIGN the PETITION go to: <https://www.womendeliveraus.org/full>

SWAN WOMEN AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

NEXT MEETING: Friday 27 February, 1.15pm, Mt Martha House Community Centre, Room 7, cnr Esplanade & Dominion Rd. Mt Martha. Contact: Maureen Donelly maurdone@gmail.com

One of SWAN's key aims concerns young people - to connect, inform and encourage positive change. **PENINSULA GRAMMAR** will be running workshops in April and May to support parents about preparing their teenagers to handle coercive control, online abuse and so on.

Keeping Kids Safe: Preventing Sexual Harm and Violence

How to have conversations that set your kids up for safe, respectful relationships

Real-world tips for parents and carers in the Mornington Peninsula Shire area to talk about respect and healthy, safe relationships and consent.

Learn how to:

- Start age-appropriate conversations about relationships, sex and consent that align with your family values
- Talk about respectful, safe and healthy relationships
- Understand new Victorian consent laws
- Support what your child is learning at school

You'll gain:

- Confidence in talking to your child about respectful relationships and consent
- Conversation tools
- Expert advice
- A community of other local parents

When & where:

Peninsula Grammar
20 Wooralla Drive, Mount Eliza,
Victoria 3930

- Wednesday 22 April, 6-8:30pm
- Wednesday 29 April, 6-8:30pm
- Wednesday 6 May, 6-8:30pm
- Wednesday 13 May, 6-8:30pm

Register now or for more info:



To learn more, contact
Laura Riccardi, Program Coordinator:
lriccardi@whise.org.au | 0401 315 387

In partnership with



SWAN Women for Housing Justice

Escalating Housing Crisis

SWAN has a strong commitment to working with community to press all levels of government to address the Mornington Peninsula's escalating crisis around homelessness and the limitations of affordable housing.

On 20 January, Mornington Peninsula News featured a front page article about the current situation on Rosebud foreshore and the death of the fifth rough sleeper in the last 14 months: **'Community leaders demand homeless action'**. The article continues on page 8 - where SWAN is referenced, with quotes from Judith Grealay. Also see a **Letter to the Editor: 'Homelessness inaction'** by Diane McDonald on page 32.

Go to: www.mpnews.com.au, use the 'Search' button, type in '20 January 2026', scroll down.

The flyer below is for a screening of **'The Ranch'** documentary, a fundraiser that includes a panel discussion with community leaders and housing practitioners to highlight the escalating homelessness crisis on the Mornington Peninsula. Even though it will be held in the CBD, please share this information with family and friends who live up that way.

A Special Screening of
The Ranch Documentary

THURSDAY 19th Feb | 6pm

Kino Cinema at Collins Place
45 Collins St, Melbourne

Tickets \$20 pp

Scan to Buy Tickets

The Mornington Peninsula is known for its breathtaking coastline, luxury homes and million-dollar beach boxes. But behind this picturesque image lies a confronting reality. **The Mornington Peninsula has the highest number of rough sleepers in Victoria.**

Payton Foundation invites you to a special screening of The Ranch, a compelling 35-minute documentary exposing the homelessness crisis on the Mornington Peninsula. Centred on a motel used as the region's only crisis accommodation centre, the film follows people experiencing homelessness and highlights the human cost of rising rents, cost-of-living pressures and limited housing options, alongside community-led responses making a difference.

The screening will be followed by a panel discussion exploring collaborative and innovative approaches to ending homelessness.

Payton Foundation **SOUTHERN PENINSULA COMMUNITY SUPPORT** **MORNINGTON COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE** **MOBILISE**

Walk In Her Shoes

Meet the
hidden face of
homelessness in
Mornington
Peninsula Shire.



See the exhibition:

Discover the hidden face of homelessness in Victoria, in this powerful exhibition telling the stories of three women who have lived it.

Where: Mornington Central Shopping Centre - 78 Barkly St, Mornington
When: 2-15 March 2026

Presented by:



Join the conversation:

The exhibition concludes with a special community forum to discuss homelessness in Mornington Peninsula Shire, and the changes needed to end it.

Featuring guest speakers:

- Rosie Batty AO, campaigner against family violence
- Hon Harriet Shing, Victorian Minister for Housing
- Local homelessness workers
- Lived experience experts

Where: Peninsula Community Theatre - 91 Wilsons Rd, Mornington
When: 16 March 2026, 6:30pm

Register to attend:



The Shire is hosting a **Public Exhibition and Community Forum** called '*Walk in Her Shoes*'. Both events present a powerful exposé of three women to understand more about what it is like to navigate homelessness and housing insecurity. The exhibition is at Mornington Central Shopping Centre from 2-15 March. The forum includes a **Panel Discussion with Rosie Batty AO, the Hon Harriet Shing, Victoria's Minister for Housing, lived experience experts and local homelessness workers**. Join us on Monday 16th March at Peninsula Community Theatre, Wilsons Rd. Mornington 6.30pm for 7pm start.

THIS EVENT IS FREE. Bookings essential: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/walk-in-her-shoes-exhibition-and-forum-mornington-tickets-1979838526328?aff=erelexpmilt>

Pantry Legend, we really need you! Demand for help with pantry items continues to grow. Can you help?



We're only a few weeks into the new year yet demand for toiletries, groceries and material aid has continued to increase. Many families have stretched their budgets through Christmas and summer holidays and are now dealing with return to school costs.

One of the many ways we help is to ease that financial burden with groceries and material aid, allowing people's limited dollars to stretch a little further. Right now, TOILETRIES are our big need. Whether it's one, some, or all of the above items, whatever you can provide please know we are truly thankful. Please drop off your pantry items to:

Southern Peninsula Community Support
878 Point Nepean Road, Rosebud
Monday to Friday 9.30am - 3.30pm

Giving a person who comes to our main centre a bag of food and toiletries doesn't just mean they can eat or shower. It means they don't have to worry about not being able to afford groceries.

From all of us at SPCS, thank you.
Sincerely, Jeremy Maxwell, CEO



**SOUTHERN
PENINSULA
COMMUNITY
SUPPORT**
HELP WHERE IT'S NEEDED

You can also join us on Tuesdays at 9.30am for a tour of Southern Peninsula Community Support - [email ceo@spcsic.org](mailto:ceo@spcsic.org) to register your interest.

If you prefer, you can make a financial donation instead, helping us to buy toiletries, groceries and other items for those doing it tough or living rough

[Click here to DONATE](#)

SWAN Bursary Students 2026

Leading the Future

Congratulations to our 2026 SWAN Bursary recipients who were awarded their bursary certificate in December 2025: Year 11 student **Lara Bassingthwaigte** from **Western Port Secondary College (WPSC)** and Year 9 student **Almira Paudel** from **Rosebud Secondary College (RSC)**. Launched in November 2024, SWAN's bursary the '**Val McKenna Young Women's Advocacy Award**' valued at \$500 is awarded to female students at local Secondary Schools who show leadership potential and interest in social justice, equity and human rights. At their end of year Awards Night held in December 2025, senior staff from both schools warmly welcomed our SWAN representatives and reiterated their commitment to an ongoing and productive relationship with SWAN.

Through 2026, SWAN members Susan Blackburn and Lyn Jones will oversee the ongoing development of the Bursary. We hope that increased donations in the coming years will enable us to give the Award to a greater number of students at additional State Secondary Schools in our region. The aim is to help strengthen youth leadership at the local level, acknowledging the potential contribution this can make towards building a more just and equitable world.



At the **MORNINGTON PENINSULA FOUNDATION (MPF) LA TROBE ORATION** in October 2025, SWAN Bursary facilitators Lyn Jones (L) and Susan Blackburn (2nd R), where Western Port Secondary College was awarded the Colin Simpson Outstanding Secondary Principal Award to Chris Quinn and Outstanding School Improvement Award.

In the previous year, Rosebud Secondary College Principal Lisa Holt was awarded the Colin Simpson Outstanding Secondary Principal Award.

Photo: Supplied

SWAN thanks the Mornington Peninsula Foundation (MPF) for its generous support in linking us with these two Schools and in supporting us to administer these Awards. This ensures that donations to the SWAN Bursary are tax deductible.

Donating to SWAN

We are a registered not-for-profit organisation

Are you celebrating a special birthday or anniversary?
Have you thought about a donation to SWAN as a gift?

General Donations support a wide range of SWAN initiatives:

<https://www.trybooking.com/au/donate/swan>

Alternatively, cash donations can be given to SWAN Treasurer Ros Beard

SWAN Bursary 'The Val McKenna Young Women's Advocacy Award'
supports our Education Bursaries for young women on their social justice journey

Information about the Bursary and instructions for making a donation:
<https://swanwomen.org.au/swan-donations-and-bursaries/>

Did You Know? Donations for the Bursary are tax deductible



We Rise Together

**Her light begins
with Education.**

**Her legacy
changes the world.**



**Payton
Foundation**



International Women's Day Luncheon: 'Her Light, Her Legacy'

Every woman and girl deserves to be safe, heard, and free to shape her own future. Yet too many still face barriers to education, opportunity, and justice. These barriers are built and they can be dismantled. **One girl educated can change everything.** Education restores dignity, builds confidence, and creates opportunity. When a girl is supported to learn, her choices expand, her future strengthens, and the positive impact extends to her family and community.

ABOUT THE EVENT: The IWD 2026 theme is 'When we give, we all gain'. Join us for an inspiring International Women's Day charity luncheon presented in collaboration with **Lauren Wild**, **Frankston Business Chamber** and the **Payton Foundation**, proudly supporting the work of **Te-Kworo Foundation**. Our goal is to collectively raise funds to support the education of 40 girls in Uganda. By investing in education, we help **Balance the Scales** creating safer futures and stronger communities.

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS

Corrie Perkin

Journalist, Author, Podcaster & Founding Director of Sorrento Writers Festival. An award-winning journalist, author, podcaster and the Founding Director of the Sorrento Writers Festival. A strong believer in the power of words to inform, connect and create change, she has worked across *The Age*, *Good Weekend*, *The Australian* and ABC Radio, and is co-host of *Don't Shoot the Messenger*. Through the Festival, now Australia's second-largest literary event and the Sorrento Writers Festival Literacy Fund, Corrie gives back by championing literacy, storytelling and equitable access to opportunity, empowering voices that strengthen communities and future generations.

Alice Achan

Founder, CEO & Ugandan Chair, Te-Kworo Foundation and **Stella Okot**

Program Manager - Education, Te-Kworo Foundation

Driven by lived experience, Alice Achan and Stella Okot have dedicated their lives to ensuring girls and young women in northern Uganda can access education, dignity, and opportunity; including those returning from conflict and young motherhood. Through education-led, community-based programs, Te-Kworo supports long-term pathways for girls to rebuild their lives and futures.

Join us at 11:45am for a 12pm start.

Tickets \$125 include a glass of bubbles on arrival, canapés, main meal and dessert. Plus a copy of 'The School of Restoration' by Alice Achan.

<https://events.humanitix.com/her-light-her-legacy>

SWAN's December Coffee Catch-Up

Our Xmas 2025 Coffee Catch Up in December was lively and lots of fun as we approached the very festive 'silly season'! Sixteen women came along, including 2 new members and one recently joined member. It always adds to the buzz when new people come as they often have lots of questions about SWAN – what we do and who we are – and more often than not, make suggestions or provide connections about how SWAN can advocate and take further action on local social justice issues. Conversations varied from family Christmas plans and the Woodford Folk Festival to the dire homelessness situation in our area to a suggestion for our next Coffee Catch Up that we're taking up.

See below for details ...



Photo: Supplied

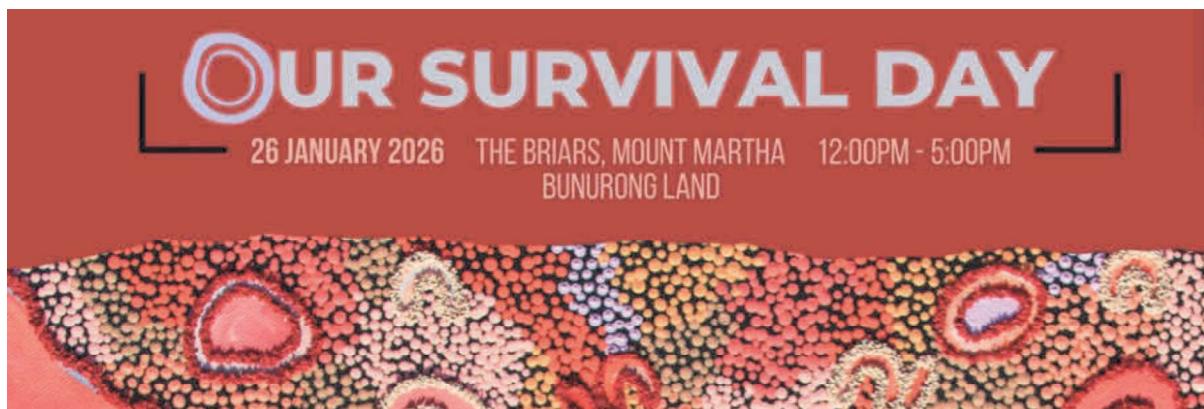
Café suggestions? Let Moz know of cafés with LARGE TABLES around the Mornington Peninsula and Frankston.

**SWAN's next Coffee Catch-Up is
SUNDAY 1st MARCH 10.00-11.30am**

**Come along to THE DAVA HOTEL
Where we can sit in a private space on the Lower-Level Quarterdeck
614 Esplanade Mt Martha.**
Friends or relatives interested in finding out about SWAN are welcome.

**RSVP: Moz Lucas
by Sunday 15 February: maureenfrances21@gmail.com**

SWAN for First Nations



26 JANUARY 2026: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS' SURVIVAL DAY 'HER STORY – MATRIARCHS'

Organised by Kayla Cartledge, CEO of the local Aboriginal organisation 'Our Songlines' and her team, OUR SURVIVAL DAY on 26 January at 'The Briars' Mt Martha on Bunurong land was an inclusive event attended by many SWAN members. Several SWAN members also regularly volunteer, helping with the event set up, directing traffic, serving on stalls and assisting with other assorted tasks. The day included a smoking ceremony, live music, food, vendors, Indigenous movement meditation, cultural walks, various workshops and a yarning tent. Participating is a great way to engage with local First Nations people, learn about their history and culture and join in a spirit of solidarity and fun.

As part of this year's Our Survival Day activities, Kayla invites SWAN members to celebrate a blak woman who has had an impact on them. To participate, select the following link:
[Our Survival Day – Her Story; Matriarchs of 2026](#)

A red poster for 'HONOUR A BLAK MATRIARCH' on 26 January 2026 at The Briars, Mount Martha, Bunurong Land. The poster features a large, stylized 'O' in the logo. Below the date and location, there is a large portrait of an elderly Aboriginal woman with short, curly hair, smiling. The text 'Aunty Yvonne Luke' is written below her name. The poster also includes the text 'OUR SURVIVAL DAY' and the Aboriginal flag.

A call to honour the women who carry us forward.

Who is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander woman you carry in your heart?
Who taught you, protected you, challenged you, or made space for you to thrive?
Tell us about her. Name her. Honour her.

How to Participate

Nominate an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander woman who has made a difference in your life or community.

Write a tribute — a letter, a story, a poem, or a few heartfelt lines.

Submit via our form www.oursurvivalday.com

Photos of OUR SURVIVAL DAY 2026 contributed by SWAN members Susan Blackburn, Marilyn Hoban, Beck Cridland, Diane McDonald, Susan Hillman Stoltz, Jill Warner and Diane Johnstone, and include the Smoking Ceremony, the Djarlo Dance Troupe, Living Culture walk with Lionel Lauch, weaving workshop with Amanda Pern, Kulin Connection workshop with Sammy Trist, yarning circle, and some of the SWAN members there.





OUR SURVIVAL DAY 2026 Yarning Tent

L: (L-R) Logan Shelley, Maureen Donelly, Zoe Upton and Jillian West.
 R: 'Her Story – Matriarchs of 2026' with (L-R) Jillian West, Aunty Yvonne Luke and Aunty Deb Mellet AO.

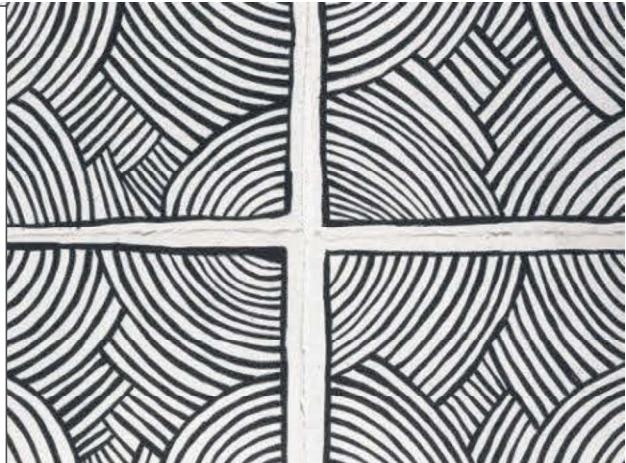
At the 'Yarning Tent', Southern Peninsula Allies presented a discussion on the theme 'Truth and Treaty: First Nations, Reconciliation, Education' in collaboration with Zoe Upton (First Peoples' Assembly Vic) and Logan Shelley (Padua College Year 11 student). Zoe, a proud Bunurong Trawoolaway woman urged allies and educators to make the truth of local history visible and defend Treaty, in partnership with Traditional Owners. The Southern Peninsula Allies shared their Treaty Campaign work and resources and Logan recounted the students' reconciliation initiatives, including production of an educational video *'Truth and Treaty: on Bunurong Country'*. The power of small steps along the path of justice!

UNFOLDING: FIRST NATIONS WORKS ON PAPER

29 November 2025 – 15 February 2026

Open: 11am-4pm (closed Mondays)
Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery

Image: Gloria Petyarre, 1997, *Untitled (Awelye)*, detail.



Warmest Congratulations to AUNTY HELEN BNADS OAM for her well-deserved Order of Australia medal awarded January 2026! Aunty Helen is a proud and highly respected Birri Gubba Elder from Queensland, recognized for her significant contributions to health, education, and Indigenous advocacy in Victoria. Inducted into the Victorian Aboriginal Honour Roll in 2019, she has served as the Elder/Cultural Lead at Peninsula Health and has presented at SWAN during NAIDOC WEEK and SWAN's VOICE Campaign. **'What's keeping me going (is) making a difference. Through all the chances I've had, it's the need to always give back, and thankfully being able to do that'** (MPNews, online). Thank you Aunty Helen for the significant and positive difference you're making now and into the future.

Understanding, Supporting and Celebrating Treaty for Victoria



Above: SWAN Committee members Beck and Jill (front left) celebrating Victoria's Treaty with Southern Peninsula Allies, 16 January.

Photo: Maureen Donelly

Left: SWAN women are invited to take up an opportunity to **celebrate the historic Victorian Treaty at Willum Warrain Aboriginal Gathering Place**. The event runs from 11am to 1pm and will include an address on Treaty, a performance by Nola Lauch & Jalgany, a sausage sizzle and birthday cake! This event coincides with **Willum Warrain's 12th birthday!**

Event organisers Mornington Peninsula Human Rights Group would appreciate volunteer help with the setup, sausage sizzle and car park marshalling. If you are keen, email doylejoan4@gmail.com

SWAN members Joan Doyle and Maureen Donelly have prepared a background document that provides detailed information about the Victorian Treaty that was recently legislated by State Parliament. This includes information that may assist in conversations with our friends, family members and other people in our networks. **You can access this document [here](#):**

As well as helping to spread the word about the significance of this historic Agreement, the most powerful thing you can do right now is to help convince any MPs who voted against this legislation to change their view and give it their whole hearted support. In particular, because the Victorian Opposition has said it would repeal the Legislated Act if elected, **SWAN members are urged to write to the following MPs:**

Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Jess Wilson MP: jess.wilson.mp@parliament.vic.gov.au
Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon Melina Bath MP: melina.bath@parliament.vic.gov.au
Member for Nepean, Sam Groth MP: sam.groth@parliament.vic.gov.au
Member for Mornington, Chris Crewther MP: chris.crewther@parliament.vic.gov.au

Meetings

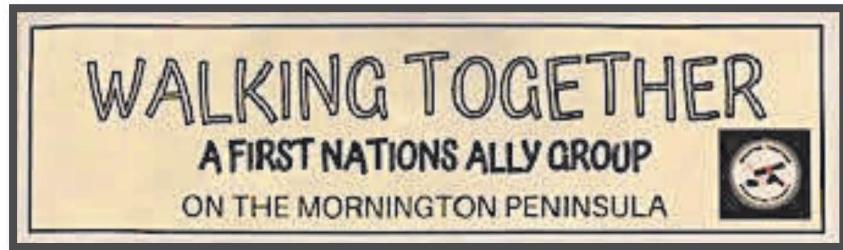
Southern Peninsula Allies for First Nations Justice

NEXT MEETING – ALL WELCOME: Friday 20 February, midday

at Rye Community House, 27 Nelson St, Rye.

Contact: southern.peninsula.allies@gmail.com

Aiming to amplify First Nations Voices, build community awareness, support Treaty and Truth-Telling and engage with First Nations communities locally.



Walking Together Mornington Peninsula is looking for more people to promote and support First Nations people, organisations, businesses and events.



Check out their latest newsletter about the Victorian Treaty. It includes a concise summary, links and media articles. Plus action on how to amplify the Treaty process and links to local MPs using their letter templates and writing tips.

Email WT to receive the Newsletter

NEWSLETTER and INQUIRIES: walkingtogethernorthernpen@gmail.com

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/walkingtogether.morningtonpen/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MorningtonPeninsulaYes23>

Dates for your Diary



- **FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY, 10-11.30am:** '*Grandmothers for Refugees Meeting: Dunkley & Flinders*', Frankston Library, Playne St. Frankston – new members welcome. More Info: Maryanne 0400 201 689 or maryannebarclay5@gmail.com
- **THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY, 11am:** '*SWAN Multicultural Interest Group*'. Interested SWAN members RSVP for meeting venue: val.campbell72@gmail.com Details p.5
- **SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY, 9.30am:** '*SWAN Special Speaker Event: Kirsty Sword Gusmao AO*' at Mt. Martha House Community Centre, cnr. Dominion Rd. & Esplanade, Mt. Martha. See flyer p.3
- **UNTIL SUNDAY 15 FEB 2026:** '*Unfolding: First Nations Works on Paper*', Mornington Regional Gallery, Civic Reserve, Dunns Rd. Mornington. Free entry. Open 11am-4pm, closed Mondays.
- **THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY, 6pm:** '*The Ranch Documentary – Special Screening & Panel Discussion*', Kino Cinema, City. Details p.7
- **FRIDAY 20 FEBRUARY, midday:** '*Southern Peninsula Allies for Justice for First Nations meeting*', Rye Community House, 27 Nelson St. Rye. Contact: southern.peninsula.allies@gmail.com
- **FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY, 1.15pm:** '*SWAN Women Against Gender-Based Violence meeting*', Mt Martha House Community Centre, Room 7, cnr Esplanade & Dominion Rd. Mt Martha. Contact: Maureen Donelly maurdone@gmail.com
- **SUNDAY 1 MARCH, 10-11.30am:** '*SWAN Coffee Catch Up*', Dava Hotel, Esplanade, Mt Martha. RSVP: Moz Lucas maureenfrances21@gmail.com by 15 February.
- **FRIDAY 6 MARCH, midday-2:30pm:** '*International Women's Day (IWD) Luncheon*', Ranelagh Club, Mount Eliza. Details p11. Tickets: <https://events.humanitix.com/her-light-her-legacy>
- **SATURDAY 14 MARCH, 10am-5pm:** '*Womin Djeka Balnarring Ngargee Festival*', Emu Plains Reserve, Coolart Rd. Balnarring. Entry by donation. Details in March newsletter.
- **SUNDAY 15 MARCH, 9.30am:** '*SWAN General Meeting: International Women's Day (IWD) with guest speaker Mary Crooks AO*', Mt Martha House Community Centre, cnr Esplanade & Dominion Rd. Mt Martha. Details in March newsletter.
- **MONDAY 16 MARCH, 6pm:** '*Walk in Her Shoes' documentary & panel discussion*', Peninsula Community Theatre, Wilsons Rd. Mornington 6.30pm for 7pm start. Free event, bookings essential. Details p.8
- **SATURDAY 21 MARCH, 11am-1pm:** '*Willum Warrain's 12th Birthday & Victorian Treaty Celebration*', Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association, 10 Pound Rd. Hastings. Free, no bookings required. Free event. Details p.15. Contact: (03) 5979 1391 or www.willumwarrain.org.au

Contact Us

SWAN News Editor:
Moz Lucas



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

SWAN NEWS CONTRIBUTIONS If you have information of interest to our members, please ensure you let the editor Moz Lucas know via swanwomen@outlook.com **Next Deadline 25 February 2025**

PHOTO/VIDEO PERMISSION Recent events and photos may appear on SWAN's Facebook page, Youtube, Instagram and website, as well as in SWAN NEWS. Please advise at the door of a SWAN meeting (or when prompted) if you do not wish to be in photographs or videos, otherwise we will take it that you are happy to have your photo published.

PHOTOS NEEDED: PLEASE EMAIL US GOOD QUALITY PHOTOS OF EVENTS/OCCASIONS OF INTEREST TO SWAN MEMBERS. INCLUDE THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S NAME AND ENSURE PERMISSION FROM THOSE PHOTOGRAPHED. SEND TO: swanwomen@outlook.com

CONTACT

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PARKING

A request from Mt Martha House Community Centre - *Please do not park in Disabled Parking areas and, if parking is tight and you are fit, please park in the rear car park. The Reserved Parking spots in front of the building are now available for public use.*

Southern Women's Action Network Inc. Reg: A0038144Z, ABN. 50 089 314 052