

SOUTHERN WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK



# Newsletter

## April 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 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. For example, February 25<sup>th</sup> for March's newsletter, March 25<sup>th</sup> for April's newsletter, and so on - through to November 25<sup>th</sup> 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 30<sup>TH</sup> YEAR!

We'd love you to come and celebrate with us! Bookings close **APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>**.



The invitation card features a purple and green wavy border at the top and bottom. In the top right corner is the SWAN logo with the text 'SOUTHERN WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK' above it and 'Women working for Social Justice' below it. The central text reads 'YOUR INVITATION' and 'CELEBRATE SWAN's 30th ANNIVERSARY!'. Below this is a photo of Ro Allen, the guest speaker, and a QR code with a humanitix logo. The event details include the date 'Sunday 24 May 2026, 12.00pm - 3.00pm', the location 'Safety Beach Sailing Club, 185 Marine Drive, Safety Beach (onsite parking)', and the cost '\$60 per person, Concession \$40 (includes a two-course lunch)'. It also mentions 'Bookings via QR Code by April 30'. At the bottom left are logos for 'MORNINGTON PENINSULA Shire' and 'Bendigo Bank'. The slogan 'SWAN: Thirty Years on and still SOARING!' is centered at the bottom.

**YOUR INVITATION**

**CELEBRATE SWAN's 30th ANNIVERSARY!**

*Sunday 24 May 2026, 12.00pm - 3.00pm*

*Safety Beach Sailing Club  
185 Marine Drive, Safety Beach (onsite parking)*

*\$60 per person, Concession \$40 (includes a two-course lunch)  
Bookings via QR Code by April 30*

*Guest Speaker: Ro Allen, Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commissioner  
'Participation, Power & Progress: mobilising movements to be stronger together with women at centre'*

We invite all members, new and long-term, your friends and supporters to join us in celebrating SWAN's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year - a unique achievement for a women-led, volunteer-based community organisation.

**SWAN: Thirty Years on and still SOARING!**

MORNINGTON PENINSULA Shire

Bendigo Bank

**TICKETS: via QR Code or go to:**

<https://events.humanitix.com/swan-30th-anniversary-lunch/tickets>

**SWAN's 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY LUNCH at Safety Beach Life Saving Club on Sunday 24<sup>TH</sup> May** is drawing near! Come and enjoy a two-course lunch in a stunning setting with uninterrupted views of the bay. Our Keynote Speaker for this very special occasion is **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.

At the lunch, we will also launch our new exhibition: **'Something More than Tea and Scones: Celebrating SWAN Women:1996-2026'**. Many of our SWAN members feature, including founding members, those who have contributed their passion and skills over time, and those amazing women involved in our current action and advocacy groups. We plan to travel this exhibition around the Mornington Peninsula and the City of Frankston over the following twelve months.

**WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP PLEASE! We are calling on members to volunteer to assist.** All offers welcomed. Contact: [swanwomen@outlook.com](mailto:swanwomen@outlook.com)

# 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

**'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

## SWAN COFFEE CATCH UP

**Our first social Catch Up for 2026 was on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March at the delightful Daisy Café on the Esplanade, Mornington.** Ten (plus doggie Bryn) came to indulge in some delicious food, talk about politics – local and overseas - downsizing, more café ideas, living in New York, and plans to attend a play currently on in Carlton: 'Cluedo'. A warm welcome to Julie whom we discovered some of us have connections through teaching. Our best 'get well wishes' to two women who'd planned to come but sadly had woken up feeling unwell. We hope to see you next time!



SWAN women at Daisy Café, Mornington

Photos: (L) Lyn Jones (R) Supplied.

Our next SWAN COFFEE (or Tea/Juice/Milkshake!) CATCH UP will be  
SUNDAY 19 APRIL 10-11.30am at a unique location:

**'STUDIO & CO' 545 Mornington-Tyabb Rd. Moorooduc**

STUDIO & CO houses art studios where you can meet the artists, craft retail, a nursery and  
**DERRIL CAFE** where we will meet for our catch up inside. Have a look at  
POSTCARDS aired Sunday 22 March on Channel 9 where STUDIO & CO featured.

RSVPs and carpooling appreciated! [maureenfrances21@gmail.com](mailto:maureenfrances21@gmail.com)

## International Women's Day (IWD) 2026

The United Nations Women Australia theme for IWD 2026 is **BALANCE THE SCALES**  
"highlighting the urgent need to ensure fair, inclusive and accessible justice for every woman  
and girl" ([unwomen.org.au](http://unwomen.org.au))

The colours of IWD - purple, green and white - originated from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in the United Kingdom in 1908 during the Suffragette Movement. PURPLE signifies justice, dignity and being loyal to the cause. GREEN symbolises hope, growth and new beginnings. WHITE stands for purity, representing solidarity and the integrity of the fight for equality.

Across the Mornington Peninsula and in the City of Frankston, many diverse events marked IWD and brought together a range of government and council representatives, frontline workers, advocacy groups and the general public. The aim was to build community connections, discover local women's groups, and to advocate for services that advance gender equality, including those that give free health, legal and financial advice. These events not only provided current information and networking opportunities, but aimed to accelerate awareness of the urgent need for action, particularly funding, in tackling local issues such as the Mornington Peninsula's housing crisis.



At the IWD event sponsored by Frankston City Council on 3 March 2026,  
SWAN members Susan Blackburn, Moz Lucas and Susan Hillman Stolz provided information and resources,  
and liaised with other services in support of women's rights, dignity and equity.

R: The 'two SWAN Susans' with Ruth Stuetgen (centre) from Frankston & Mornington Peninsula Primary  
Prevention Collaborative. Photos: L (Ruth Stuetgen), R (Moz Lucas)



On 4 March for IWD, room 57 at Mt Martha House Community Centre became a dynamic space packed with women-centered information, advocacy and support services, launched by Bethany Adams (above) from the Salvation Army Family Violence support team and Frankston & Mornington Peninsula Primary Prevention Collaborative. The event was sponsored by Mornington Peninsula Shire Council. Each organisation was given the opportunity to talk about their service to the wider group and encouraged to network, including SWAN members Dr Helen Keleher, Susan Blackburn (bottom right) and Moz Lucas. Photos: Moz Lucas



## SWAN IWD Speaker Event

For International Women's Day (IWD), on Sunday 15 March at Mt Martha House Community Centre, Mary Crooks AO addressed SWAN members on **'Rights, Justice, Action for all Women and Girls: Maintain the Struggle for Women's Safety'**. Mary's legacy is significant for her work in challenging political agendas and progressing support from men to advocate with women for equality, safety, and enduring change. Mary recently retired as the long-term Executive Director of the Victorian Women's Trust and continues to be a dedicated feminist leader - never afraid to speak truth to power, who has championed women's rights for decades.

For those unable to attend our IWD meeting - and for those who heard the power and authenticity of Mary's presentation and want an opportunity to reflect more deeply on the important messages it contains - see **Mary Crook's full transcript by opening the PDF document on this newsletter's intro/contents page**. Towards the end of Mary's talk, we formed small groups to discuss:

1. *What have I learnt today from Mary's talk?*
2. *One thing I can commit to doing - before the next SWAN meeting - to advance the rights of women is ...*

**Some key points and quotes from Mary's candid presentation:**

\* *"IWD events give us pause ... to recommit on equal justice for women"*

\* **Work in harmony and respect with men as allies**, alongside the understanding that most of the violence against women is by men.

\* **On the distribution of power: men own most of the wealth, political control, labour market, and hold deep seated sexist beliefs that ratify masculine culture.** This requires an increasing number of men to challenge and to change male dominated policies. Male allyship does exist across the political spectrum. **At the same time, in respect of subjugation, sometimes women are complicit** and control is sanctioned in subliminal ways eg. *'boys will be boys'*.

\* **The Women's Movement has brought results** – part of the challenge is to wear down patriarchal systems and draw attention to the general societal 'wilful blindness' of violence against women.

***"SWAN is something special," said Mary, "SWAN's longevity and collective power of women is even more important in today's age of social media."***



On behalf of the Victoria Women's Trust, Mary gratefully received SWAN's donation. Thank you to our raffle sponsors Farrells Bookshop Mornington and 2 Left Sisters Cafe Mornington, and for the gorgeous flowers for the speaker donated by Secret Garden Mornington.



Photos: Moz Lucas & Beck Cridland



### FURTHER READING

This **ABC News article** reinforces some of the concerns raised by Mary Crooks: [https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-03-27/traditional-gender-roles-make-comeback-gender/106497264?utm\\_source=abc\\_news\\_web&utm\\_medium=content\\_shared&utm\\_campaign=abc\\_news\\_web&utm\\_content=mail](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-03-27/traditional-gender-roles-make-comeback-gender/106497264?utm_source=abc_news_web&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_campaign=abc_news_web&utm_content=mail)

Click the link below to view the chapter '**Fragility & Hope**' from Mary's book '**A World of Uncertainty**' (2018) that she said is still very relevant today: [https://www.futureleaders.com.au/book\\_chapters/Fragility-and-Hope/Mary-Crooks.php](https://www.futureleaders.com.au/book_chapters/Fragility-and-Hope/Mary-Crooks.php)

# SWAN Women at Homeless Forum

During March, the **Council to Homeless Persons** facilitated an **IWD Public Exhibition and Community Forum ‘Walk in Her Shoes’**, hosted by Mornington Peninsula Shire. The exhibition and the forum are travelling to eleven Victorian LGAs. Both events present a powerful exposé of women navigating homelessness and housing insecurity, especially relevant to the Mornington Peninsula with the highest rate of homelessness in Victoria.

**Despite the inclement weather, the Peninsula Community Theatre in Mornington was packed for the robust Community Forum and Panel Discussion on 16 March with (L-R) Ben Smith, Mornington Community Support Centre CEO; Chris Crewther MP Member for Mornington; the Hon Harriet Shing, Victoria’s Minister for Housing; Gemma Hughes, Fusion; Rosie Batty AO; and facilitator Deborah Di Natale, Council for Homeless Persons CEO.** SWAN members were there in force (bottom left). Photos: Supplied.



Of highest concern – expressed by local councillors, frontline workers and overwhelmingly by the audience – is the dire need for funding to create the infrastructure urgently needed – buildings and staff. A structural impediment to the Mornington Peninsula receiving its fair share of social housing funding is directly related to the how the Peninsula is zoned – as metropolitan. Compared to the City of Geelong zoned as regional which has a lower rate of homelessness yet more funding, our Shire feels stymied in its appeals to the Victorian State Government for genuine, practical and enduring support, and for leadership.

## 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:





Council to Homeless Persons 'WALK IN HER SHOES' (March 2-15) interactive community display at Mornington Centro Shopping Centre where the audience were provided with markers and post-it notes to add their viewpoint about homelessness to the display. Photos: Moz Lucas

## SWAN Women Against Gender-Based Violence

The Women Against Gendered Violence group continues to 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. **SIGN the PETITION:** <https://www.womendeliveraus.org/full>

### SWAN WOMEN AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**NEXT MEETING:** Friday 24 April, 1.15pm, Mt Martha House Community Centre, Room 7, cnr Esplanade & Dominion Rd. Mt Martha. Contact: Maureen Donnelly [maurdonc@gmail.com](mailto:maurdonc@gmail.com)

### KEEPING KIDS SAFE: PREVENTING SEXUAL HARM AND VIOLENCE

One of SWAN's WAGBV Group's key aims concerns young people's safety. We advocate support for parents and guardians in preparing their children to handle coercive control, online abuse and so on: to be informed and equipped for handling challenges and to bring positive change.

*Keeping Kids Safe (KKS)* is a free, four-session course for parents and caregivers of Years 5 to 9 students to build confidence in talking with their young people about relationships, consent and respect and sex in a way that aligns with their family values, culture and faith.

Peninsula Grammar in Mt Eliza is hosting this joint initiative between LA TROBE UNIVERSITY and WOMEN'S HEALTH IN THE SOUTH EAST (WHISE) throughout April and May.

This Australian-first initiative is research based and created by a team of experts deeply dedicated to the prevention of sexual violence. It is designed to provide parents and guardians

with the opportunity to equip themselves with the tools to have open, respectful and age-appropriate conversations with their young people about consent, gender, sexuality and relationships.

The free program is targeted to parents of children in **Years 5 to 9** and takes place over **four consecutive weeks**. To support you in applying your knowledge you will receive practical resources including a book, workbook and conversation starters.

**We encourage you to seize the opportunity to learn in a supportive environment** where you can connect with other parents, ask questions, apply knowledge and reflect on your role in shaping a culture of consent.

**Course outline:**

- Session 1: Parents as educators for young people including strategies for communicating about sex with young people
- Session 2: Healthy relationships and affirmative consent laws
- Session 3: Sexual safety for young people including online, physical and emotional safety
- Session 4: Understanding the social and cultural drivers of violence and how to take preventative action

**Course details (attend all 4 sessions):**

- Wednesday 22 April, 6:00 – 8:30pm
- Wednesday 29 April, 6:00 – 8:30pm
- Wednesday 6 May, 6:00 – 8:30pm
- Wednesday 13 May, 6:00 – 8:30pm

**We invite you to be part of something special and help build the evidence base for primary prevention of sexual violence through your engagement with this program.**

If you would like to know more we invite you to watch this [video](#)

To register for the program, click here: <https://whise.org.au/keeping-kids-safe/>

Under the theme **'We are Stronger Together'**, on Sunday 29 March several Grandmothers for Refugees who are also SWAN members, along with the Refugee Advocacy Network, participated in the **PALM SUNDAY WALK FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE** in Melbourne. The purpose of the walk was to protest the Australian government's refusal to grant permanent visas to refugees and asylum seekers, calling for justice, safety, and dignity for all.

Photo: Marilyn Hoban





## Positive Ageing Newsletter

Autumn  
2026  
Edition #42



Mornington Peninsula Shire  
**Positive Ageing**

### What's inside?

- Celebrating volunteers
- Driver refresher sessions
- Southern Women's Action Network
- Postcards from Dromana
- Art and Imagination
- Soundwaves at Cerberus
- Recycle right
- Seniors exercise parks
- and more!

SWAN features on the cover of this year's Autumn edition of the Mornington Peninsula Shire's POSITIVE AGEING NEWSLETTER. A fabulous promo for SWAN! Printed copies are available throughout the Shire. The newsletter is also located on the Shire website here:

[Positive-Ageing-Newsletter  
https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Community-Services/Older-People/Positive-Ageing/Positive-Ageing-Newsletter](https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Community-Services/Older-People/Positive-Ageing/Positive-Ageing-Newsletter)

## Ageism in the Workplace

**SWAN member Rosemarie Draper OAM is involved with a project exploring ageism in the workplace, with a focus on women's experiences and the impact this has had on them.** Rosemarie is a professional social worker. She joined SWAN over two decades ago and is a former member of the SWAN Committee.

For details go to:  
<https://www.celebrateageing.com/theworkplace.html>

**Rosemarie encourages any interested SWAN members to consider being interviewed by her, with the assurance that any identifiable information will be kept confidential, or for members to participate in the written survey that is also a part of this project.**

To find out more or make arrangements to be interviewed, please contact Rosemarie on 0435620191 or at [primroses4@icloud.com](mailto:primroses4@icloud.com)

### **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.***

# SWAN & Harmony Week 2026



L-R: Harmony Week event in Mornington, 18 March – Moz Lucas representing SWAN, Rosemarie Draper AO a member of the newly formed Mornington Peninsula Multicultural Collaborative Network, and Maureen Donnelly from Southern Peninsula Allies for Justice for First Nations. Also present was Marilyn Hoban representing Grandmothers for Refugees. Rosemarie, Maureen and Marilyn are also SWAN members. Photo: Supplied.

Joining a range of information, support and advocacy services, SWAN set up a stall for **Harmony Week (16–22 March 2026)** at Alexandra Pavillion, Mornington, taking part in the Mornington Peninsula Shire's **Cultures in Connection** event. Harmony Week is a national celebration of Australia's cultural diversity and a reminder of the importance of **inclusiveness, respect, and belonging**. The week also includes the **United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March)** – a timely reminder that we all share responsibility in standing against racism and supporting fairness and respect for everyone. Led by **Cass Boyle**, the Shire's Community Multicultural Officer, and **Andrea Gaddie** and **Tristan Pagnielo-Priolo** from the **Centre for Culture, Equity and Health**, conversations, learning and connection among local organisations highlighted:

- The strength and value of our partnerships across the Peninsula
- Our shared commitment to inclusion and equity
- How important collaboration is in supporting multicultural communities

**ANNOUNCEMENT!** The Shire is creating a **MULTICULTURAL COLLABORATIVE NETWORK** and are inviting community members and local service providers to be part of it.

#### **Purpose of the Network:**

- \* Strengthen communication and relationships with multicultural communities.
- \* Help create a safe, welcoming and inclusive Mornington Peninsula.
- \* Support connections between community, services and local projects.
- \* Share news, training, opportunities and updates.
- \* Work together to ensure multicultural communities are included and that their voices are heard and supported.

**First Meeting:** June 2026

**Ongoing:** Every **two months**.

**Expression of Interest:** If you would like to join the Multicultural Collaborative Network or learn more

**Email:** [culture.connects@mornpen.vic.gov.au](mailto:culture.connects@mornpen.vic.gov.au)

**Phone:** 03 5950 1516

# SWAN for First Nations



## WILL TRUTH-TELLING LEAD TO JUSTICE?

The links below will take you to some thought-provoking articles written by some of the leaders of the Uluru Dialogue. They are well worth consideration. This includes a powerful opinion piece by Uluru Youth Co-Chair Bridget Cama who spent a decade working on the Uluru Statement from the Heart and its proposed reforms: a constitutional Voice to Parliament and a Makarrata Commission. **Bridget argues that Truth-Telling without an institutional Voice is flawed.** Without structural change it will not achieve meaningful reform and risks being a distraction rather than a priority. Bridget highlights that Australia has held many truth-telling processes over the decades, yet their recommendations have rarely been implemented. She challenges the assumption that truth-telling automatically leads to justice, noting that, in Australia and globally, this has not always been the case.

## CAN TRUTH-TELLING DELIVER THE CHANGE NEEDED?

by Bridget Cama, Uluru Youth Co-Chair

[https://cheekmedia.substack.com/p/can-truth-telling-deliver-the-change?mc\\_cid=7b3073de7a&mc\\_eid=25018ae9e1](https://cheekmedia.substack.com/p/can-truth-telling-deliver-the-change?mc_cid=7b3073de7a&mc_eid=25018ae9e1)

## WE DON'T NEED ANOTHER NATIONAL TRUTH-TELLING PROCESS

by Prof Megan Davis AC

[https://professormegandavis.substack.com/p/we-dont-need-another-national-truth?r=en6sw&utm\\_medium=ios&mc\\_cid=7b3073de7a&mc\\_eid=25018ae9e1&triedRedirect=true](https://professormegandavis.substack.com/p/we-dont-need-another-national-truth?r=en6sw&utm_medium=ios&mc_cid=7b3073de7a&mc_eid=25018ae9e1&triedRedirect=true)



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

**INQUIRIES and to receive the WT NEWSLETTER:**  
[walkingtogethormorningtonpen@gmail.com](mailto:walkingtogethormorningtonpen@gmail.com)

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/walkingtogether.morningtonpen/>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MorningtonPeninsulaYes23>

# Willum Warrain's 12<sup>th</sup> Birthday and Victorian Treaty Celebration !

On Saturday 21 March, SWAN members joined Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association members and allies at the Aboriginal Gathering Place in Hastings on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to celebrate the Victorian Treaty and the Association's 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary. On commemorating 12 years of caring for its community members and the site that it has woven into a beautiful place of reconciliation. CEO Uncle Peter Aldenhoven said, 'We thank all our mob and allies for helping us celebrate our birthday and for sharing our excitement and hopes for Treaty.' Keynote speaker Bunurong woman Zoe Upton whose family was impacted by policies that led to the Stolen Generation stated, 'The Victorian Treaty holds the promise of a better future for my people. It is exciting to see so many now supporting it', adding 'With Australia's first Treaty now enacted, people from all round the Peninsula are celebrating bridge-building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians.'



things their way and taking care of the land. We are supporting this event because we are committed to the right of First Peoples to self-determination and to celebrate the Treaty as a first step in this direction.' The event also marked the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and was attended by Yorta Yorta woman Sheena Watt MP, Member of the Victorian Legislative Council for the Northern Metropolitan Region, Chair of the Victorian government's anti-racism taskforce. Celebrations followed the speakers with a performance by Jalgany with Aboriginal singer Nola Lauch, dancing and birthday cake!

Photos pp.13-15 feature addresses by Willum Warrain CEO Peter Aldenhoven, Paul Mercurio MLA Hastings, Julie Pittle, and Sheena Watt MP, the Smoking Ceremony, the band Jalgany, the beautiful Willum Warrain Birthday cakes, and SWAN members and allies.

Photos provided by Diane Johnstone, Rosemarie Draper, Marg Darcy & Maureen Donnelly.







# WOMIN DJEKA BALNARRING NGARGEES FESTIVAL 2026



The sun shone and Bunjil the eagle soared above a large and vibrant community gathering at Emu Plains Reserve on Saturday 14 March to honour and celebrate First People's culture. Festival goers enjoyed a full day of music, headlined by Dan Sultan, and engaged with Indigenous-led dancing by the Boonwurrung Ngargee troupe, a range of workshops and market stalls, and cultural walks and yidaki meditation with Living Culture.



The event drew many SWAN members including (L-R) Moz Lucas, Janet Turnbull, Beck Cridland with Bryn, and Jill Warner. Several SWAN members were also volunteers.  
Photos: Janet Turnbull, Moz Lucas, Derek Warner.

## *IS SPARE WOOL OR CRAFT MATERIAL GATHERING DUST IN YOUR CUPBOARD?*

Please check your cupboards and linen press for any unwanted skeins of woollen yarn, knitting needles, crochet hooks, sewing and craft materials. **Activity staff at NAIRM MARR DJAMBANA ABORIGINAL GATHERING PLACE** are keen to take them off your hands and give them a new life.

These items will be used to bring community together in a creative and collaborative art project. Take donations to Nairm Marr Djambana 32 Nursery Ave in Frankston between 10am - 4.00pm on weekdays.

Further information:  
[admin@djambana.org.au](mailto:admin@djambana.org.au)



## **INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY CELEBRATED AT BALUK ARTS**



SWAN member Maureen Donnelly and Helen Soulsby from Southern Peninsula Allies Group attended Baluk Arts International Women's Day Exhibition and Yarning event on 7th March.

**Yarning Facilitator and Cultural Educator, Taungwurrung artist Sammy Trist** invited the participating women artists to talk about their work and how it empowers them as First Nation's women: **Terrie Stewart** (*Taungurung*), **Aimee McCartney** (*Taungurung, Wotjobalak, Wemba Wemba and Boon Wurrung*), **Sherryn Antonopolous** (*Taungurung*) and **Vicki Thomas** (*Bunurong, Trawlwoolway, and Bunurong Land Council member*).

Vikki spoke to Helen and Maureen about the racism she endures to this day and the role of her work in firing her spirit. She has created designs for local Dreamtime games, a cultural trail, the Peninsula University Hospital, Cotton On and more. Check out her work at <https://www.facebook.com/p/Art-works-by-Vicki-100065138558987/>

L-R Helen Soulsby, Bunurong Trawlwoolway artist Vicki Thomas, Maureen Donnelly.  
Photo provided by Maureen Donnelly.

## COMING UP AT BALUK ARTS

**'Wamuya gowidja: left behind' by Janet Bromley & Baluk Arts Members**

**15 April - 12 May**

Janet is a Yorta Yorta artist whose unique practice incorporates traditional weaving techniques with recycled materials and found objects.

**Opening celebrations: 1pm Wednesday 22 April (to coincide with Earth Day). [RSVP HERE >>](#)**

*"Caring for Country: be aware of the environment, take only what you need. This is all based on my connection to my ancestor's way of making and providing for their families. It's a conversation starter about waste, and what we can all do about it".*

**Workshop: Weaving with recycled materials with Janet Bromley  
Saturday 18th April**

**Info & to register your interest: [gallery@balukarts.org.au](mailto:gallery@balukarts.org.au)**



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## Dates for your Diary



- **FRIDAY 10 APRIL, 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](mailto:maryannebarclay5@gmail.com)
- **FRIDAY 17 APRIL, midday: 'Southern Peninsula Allies for Justice for First Nations meeting'**, Rye Community House, 27 Nelson St. Rye. **Contact:** [southern.peninsula.allies@gmail.com](mailto:southern.peninsula.allies@gmail.com)
- **SUNDAY 19 APRIL, 10-11.30am: 'SWAN Coffee Catch Up'**, Derril Café at Studio & Co. 545 Mornington-Tyabb Rd. Moorooduc. **RSVP:** [maureenfrances21@gmail.com](mailto:maureenfrances21@gmail.com) **Details p.4**
- **SUNDAY 19 APRIL: 'National Walk for Truth'**, Parliament of Victoria, Spring St, East Melbourne (Naarm). Organised by the Yoorook Justice Commission. **Info & Bookings:** <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/national-walk-for-truth-tickets-1984591691172>
- **WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL, 10.30am: 'Exhibition Opening: Wamuya Gowidja: left behind'** by Janet Bromley and Baluk Arts Members, [exhibition 15 April - 12 May](#), 5 Davies Ave, Mt Eliza. **Details: p.18**
- **WEDNESDAYS 6-8.30pm, 22 & 29 APRIL, 6 & 13 May – 'Keeping Kids Safe: Preventing Sexual Harm & Violence'**, Peninsula Grammar, 20 Wooralla Drive, Mt Eliza. **Registration essential. Details pp.8-9**
- **FRIDAY 24 APRIL, 1.15pm: 'SWAN Women Against Gender-Based Violence meeting'**, Mt Martha House Community Centre, Room 7, cnr Esplanade & Dominion Rd. Mt Martha. **Contact:** Maureen Donnelly [maurdone@gmail.com](mailto:maurdone@gmail.com)
- **SUNDAY 24 MAY, 12.00 – 3.00pm: 'SWAN 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION'**, Safety Beach Sailing Club, 185 Marine Drive, Safety Beach. **Details p.2. Bookings essential for catering purposes by April 30:** <https://events.humanitix.com/swan-30th-anniversary-lunch/tickets>

# Contact Us

SWAN News Editor:  
Moz Lucas

SOUTHERN WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK



**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](mailto:swanwomen@outlook.com) **Next Deadline 25 April 2026**

**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](mailto:swanwomen@outlook.com)

## CONTACT

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**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/spwswan/>

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- \* Zen Living: 70 Main Street Mornington (03) 5975 1013 [zenlivingmornington.com](http://zenlivingmornington.com)

## 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