

Victorian COUNTRY WOMAN



The Country Women's
Association of Victoria Inc.

care **empower** contribute

All women, all ages, all places

APRIL / MAY 2024 | VOLUME 72 NUMBER 2



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Association of Victoria Inc.

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Join Us!



EVENT DETAILS

State Conference 2024
and the Association's
96th Annual General
Meeting

VENUE

Victoria Pavillon
Melbourne Royal
Showgrounds, Epsom
Rd, Ascot Vale, Victoria

Conference Registration
Essential:

Via your Branch

STATE DINNER

7 pm FRIDAY, 31 May

Victoria Pavillon

Dinner cost: \$100 per
person includes three
course dinner, tea and
coffee, DJ and dancing

Dinner bookings online
at:

[www.ticketebo.com.au
/cwaofvic](http://www.ticketebo.com.au/cwaofvic)

31 May - 1 June STATE CONFERENCE 2024

Theme: Advocating for Change

Always a highlight in the Association's year, State Conference 2024 will include an array of keynote speakers, debate on resolutions, interactive sessions and much more. This is your opportunity to meet with members from across Victoria and to make a difference.

This year's guest speakers will include:

Premier of Victoria The Hon. Jacinta Allan MP

and

**Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights
Commissioner Ro Allen**

All members welcome  The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. - CWA

We respect First Nations Elders past, present and future and acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of First Nations peoples of the lands on which our members meet, and commit to building a brighter future together.

www.cwaofvic.org.au



The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.

care empower contribute

Patron: Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, The Governor of Victoria

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Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW)

APRIL / MAY 2024
VOLUME 72 | NUMBER 2

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COVER PHOTO

International Womens Day Event with Jenny Nola, The Hon. Justice Taylor, Sue Smethurst and Emma Germano

2024 DETERMINATIONS

Theme: Women Advocating For Change
State Project Video Conferencing Facilities – Improving Communication Technology to Regional Areas
Product/Resource Pulses
Country of Study Romania
Social Issues Focus Advocating For Change
Thanksgiving Fund Fiona Elsey

STATE PRESIDENT



Jennifer Nola
State President

I have had a couple of months of wonderful travel around the state visiting Groups for their AGMs and meeting more members as I go. As I type this, I am halfway to Adelaide to watch Carlton hopefully win their Gather Round match. Go Blues! The terrain of our state is so different from one side to the other. It is a bit like our branches and how they support

the different communities across the State of Victoria. Some of the land is flat for cropping like the Wimmera, other parts are mountainous, and tree filled like the Grampians, our high country or the southwestern pine tree farmland and of course our river lands. Then we have our stunning beaches and the mountains leading up to the northeast and far east of Victoria. To compare our land to our branches (I have been listening to lots of wonderfully inspiring Secretary Reports) we have the ones who make meals for the needy, who knit and craft items for cancer sufferers, the homeless and prisoners in need, the ones who raise money to support food share organisations and then there are those who love making craft items for our showbags and our exhibitions or advocating for those who need extra help. We are all different, but a part of the same awesome big TEAM called The Country Women's Association of Victoria!

Our Strategic Plan launch on the 16th of April with the Minister's advisor, Mr Anthony Schinck (DJSIR) in attendance, will be a greatly inspiring moment for our Association. After nine months of hard work by so many members we are off and away. Our first advocacy workshop has occurred with lots of great input from those in attendance, training sessions for members have begun with our first Branch office bearer and Group President training sessions completed, 'The Return of Civility' workshop with Tanya Heaney-Voigt for Group Presidents which we held at State Council was well received and enthusiastically embraced by all in attendance. I am very excited about ticking off some of the items on the 2024 Operational part of this Plan that was agreed by the board at the February Board meeting.

Plans for this year's AGM and State Conference are well underway and I hope you have heard from your Group President that we are back at the Victoria Pavilion again this year thanks to the generosity of the Royal Agriculture Society. Venue hire is becoming quite an issue for the Association in presenting our annual conference. I sincerely hope as many of you as possible will be in attendance to hear our guest speakers, to continue the work on our Advocacy Plan and to rekindle friendships from across the state. Our three-course dinner and of course lots of dancing on the Friday night is an event not to be missed. CWA women know how to have a good time!

The next six months of the year will be very busy for all members who like to be active in the work of the Association. With preparations for the State Exhibition (9-10/8), Open House Melbourne (27-28/7), further branch office bearer training

in regional centres and of course the Melbourne Royal Show (20/9-7/10 inc. bump in and bump out) well underway we have lots to participate in if that is your thing. We are always looking for volunteers to assist the staffing at any and all of these events so please check your diaries to see if you can help at these state events. Keep up the great work you have been doing to support vulnerable and disadvantaged women, children and families in your local communities.

See you at State Conference!

State Diary Dates for 2024

31ST MAY – 1ST JUNE –

CWA AGM & State Conference

27TH JUNE –

State Council via Zoom

27TH - 28TH JULY –

Open House @ Umina

9TH – 10TH AUGUST –

State Exhibition @ Moe

5TH SEPTEMBER –

State Council via Zoom

20TH – 25TH SEPTEMBER –

Show Bump In

26TH SEPT – 6TH OCT –

Melbourne Royal Show – please volunteer!

7TH SEPTEMBER –

Show Bump Out

27TH – 28TH NOVEMBER –

State Council @ Umina

7TH DECEMBER –

State Fare @ Umina

Please send the dates for your Branch/Group Exhibitions and locations to Robyn at email:

cwaadmin@cwaofvic.com.au

EDITOR'S REPORT



Amanda Millar
Editor

Welcome to our new look magazine based on the look and feel of the Association's new Communications Toolkit designed for us in 2023 by Seftons. We hope you will enjoy the new format magazine which will continue to bring you bi-monthly news and information about our Association.

As both Chair of the Communications and Magazine Committee and Editor of Victorian Country Woman magazine this year – I could not be more proud of the amazing group of women with whom I have had the pleasure of working this year. Special thanks to Deputy Editors Jane Dewildt and Jenny Tuck, Committee Secretary Agnes Veldhuizen, and Committee Members Sarah Barnbrook, Judie Gade, Joanne Legg, Danielle O'Farrell and to Paula McGavin.

Being on a CWA of Victoria Committee helps you to increase your involvement and to make a difference. Thinking of joining a Committee this year? Please send your expression of interest – setting out the skills and experience you could bring to our State President Jenny Nola at email: statepresident@cwaofvic.org.au

Thank you to all who have entered the State Literature Competition 2024. We have been delighted by the response. Winners will be announced at State Conference on 31 May – 1 June.

SOCIAL ISSUES



Sally Matthews
Social Issues Chairman

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting many of you at your Group A.G.Ms and Conferences. I visited Eastern Foothills in Boronia, West Gippsland in Keysborough, and Mitchell Group in Aberfeldie. I was so impressed listening to the Branch Secretary reports and was so grateful not to have had to select the winning reports! They were all so descriptive of your amazing dedication to our organisation, your support of the

community and filled with wonderful experiences that you have enjoyed this past year.

It reinforced for me that we are one organisation with members spread across the State all enriching CWA in unique ways and spreading the warmth of friendship in your branches and communities. All of you impressed me with your support of vulnerable women and families in your communities and gave me some excellent feedback for the Social Issues Committee.

Anzac Day is a time for reflection and an opportunity to feel extremely grateful for the women who served our country both in the armed services and at home. I have many fond memories of the stories my grandmothers and mother shared of the war years. My mother was just 7 at the beginning of the Second World War and she knitted for the war effort. A beautiful knitter



Photo (L to R): Communications and Magazine Committee Members: Sarah Barnbrook, Jenny Tuck, Amanda Millar and Judie Gade

Finally if you've sent in an article and it wasn't published – we do apologise that space doesn't always permit us to include all the submitted material – especially as we are now featuring tailored content based on each edition's theme. But please do send us your photos, ideas and contributions to email: cwamagazine@cwaofvic.org.au as we're always on the hunt for fresh ideas.

all her life, she enjoyed the company of the women at Red Cross meetings over the long war years. Both my grandmothers built homes during the war years. There are family stories of too many toilets, hand basins and baths arriving as it was important that they all match and eventually you were lucky to have them all in pink or green. These women were strong role models, caring for their own families but always at the ready to support those in need. My maternal grandmother drove for the Red Cross and some of the sad stories after meeting the injured at the rail stations have never left me. War took the life of her brother and I know she was affected her whole life by this.

I have just finished reading 'Any Ordinary Day' written by Leigh Sales. Leigh takes us through the news and journalists looking to sensationalise. What we learn is that the terrible things affect a very small number of people. How these people cope is the story. A profound read and it has left me with a passion to live each day to its fullest with gratitude for the life we have in this wonderful free country.

Leigh writes, "To live life, we have to take risks, most of which we will never know we're taking. The things you think you wouldn't be able to survive, you probably can. Be grateful for the ordinary days and to savour every last moment of them. They're not so ordinary, really. Hindsight makes them quite magical."

OUR CWA SERVICE WOMEN



Danielle O'Farrell Amanda Millar

This piece is about honouring Australian women who have and continue to serve our nation through their involvement in the ADF. Recognising their contribution during times of war is just as vital as recognising Australian men in similar circumstances.

Australian women have been involved in a range of conflicts in locations across the world, often experiencing the same challenging conditions as the men who served.

On the home front, Australia has seen women live with changing circumstances as they have personally adapted to the effects of war and across communities large and small. From being a single parent for extended periods of time while husbands are deployed abroad and dealing with the uncertainty of their safe return; to picking up the tools in factories when there was a shortage of men due to war efforts; to dealing with PTSD and physical injury upon their loved ones return; women have banded together within their communities to offer support to each other.

Similarly through volunteer organisations like the CWA, Australian women have made many contributions and sacrifices for this country's safety and security.

They have written themselves into this country's history of wartime endeavours and this has contributed to the lives we Australians live today. Their stories reflect courage, and resilience; they reflect sacrifice; they are the ethos of Australian egalitarianism and they should be shared.

This article explores 3 of our CWA members who have stories to share about their direct experiences in the ADF.

ELIZABETH KENNEDY (NEE SCOTT)

You could say that my family has a military history, starting with my grandfather who was on the second landing at Gallipoli during WW1, then my father who lied about his age to enlist in WW2 and spent his 20th birthday in Darwin getting bombed by the Japanese. Dad was also in PNG where he witnessed the Japanese planes carrying the Japanese area commanders landing to sign the surrender papers.

I spent 10 years in the Army Reserves working as Company Clerk, Quartermasters Storeman and Truck Driver, which is where I meet my husband who served in the Australian Army for 20 years until he was discharged TPI due to injuries suffered while on active duty overseas.

But that is not who this article is about; it is about my grandmother Elizabeth Howard Kennedy (née Scott). Grandma was born in Tibshelf near Newcastle-on-Tyne and trained to be a nurse. In 1916 she enlisted in His Majesty's Forces as a member of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS) where she was posted to the Lakenham Military Hospital.

Meanwhile Sergeant James (Jim) Kennedy, who left Gallipoli on the last hospital ship out, was sent to fight in Egypt then France. While in France he was wounded in the hip and was sent to the Lakenham Military Hospital to have shrapnel removed. Sgt Kennedy's wounds were tended to by Sister Scott. When he was deemed fit, he was sent back to France where he suffered severe machine gun wounds to both legs. His legs were saved from amputation by a French surgeon, and he was evacuated back to Lakenham Military Hospital where he was again tended to by Sister Scott.

While undertaking officer training at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge Jim proposed to Elizabeth. She declined several proposals as only unmarried women were eligible to serve in QAIMNS. When Jim and Elizabeth were married in Tibshelf on 3rd February 1917 Elizabeth was required to resign her Commission. Their first child (Howard) was born 5th December 1917.

At the end of the war Elizabeth and Howard travelled to Australia on one of the many "bride ships". Elizabeth stayed with Jim's family until Jim, now a Lieutenant, arrived home several months later on a troop ship.

When Jim arrived home, they lived in Dandenong and then Murrumbidgee until they were offered land in the Mallee District under the Soldiers Settlement Scheme. They were able to purchase a block of one square mile for 8 shillings an acre in its natural state – covered in mallee scrub. Due to his war wounds Jim was unable to return to his pre-war work as a farrier and blacksmith so decided to give it a go.

They were allocated a block at Moondah about 12 miles north of Manangatang. The family travelled by train to Manangatang in September 1921. They set up camp on the property which they named "Lyndhurst". The road from Manangatang was a track cleared in the mallee scrub and the nearest water was a dam four miles away.

Elizabeth had completed her nursing training in Glasgow and Newcastle-on-Tyne and had always lived in cities so this would have been a massive culture shock to her. No fences, no house not even a shack, just mallee scrub. She just got stuck in and carried on.

There was no hospital or doctor in the area and the returned soldiers' families were living in primitive conditions, Elizabeth's skills as a nurse and especially mid-wife

were in great demand. She was called out at all times of the day and night, dropping everything to attend births and medical emergencies leaving instructions for her own small family to look after themselves. She was often away for days at a time having to travel distances in a horse and sulky to assist others. Any medical or midwifery services Elizabeth provided were free of charge.

Jim and Elizabeth were instrumental in forming a committee to build a school in Moondah and Elizabeth organised the Government to supply a teacher and textbooks etc. The school opened in 1925 which was good because by 1927 Jim and Elizabeth had 6 children of their own.

Elizabeth joined the Manangatang branch of the Country Women's Association in the 1920s and she held several positions including taking on the President's role in 1931. Elizabeth would travel the 14 miles to meetings in a horse and sulky often arriving home after dark.

And as reported in the Argus on 19 April 1930 she was eager to share her knowledge of midwifery:

Manangatang. — The branch had a busy meeting, when there were 27 members present, and four new ones enrolled. Mrs Kennedy gave a most interesting lecture on "Emergency Midwifery Until the Doctor Arrives." This information was appreciated by members, and they hope that Mrs Kennedy will give another lecture at a future date.

Elizabeth was active organising Mallee settlers to petition the government to improve their conditions and gain assistance. She utilised her CWA affiliation by representing Manangatang at CWA state conferences held in Melbourne and made applications under the State relief committee scheme.

In April 1931 she addressed the CWA State Conference on "The Brave Women of the Mallee. So impressive were Mrs Kennedy's and Mrs Ray's speeches they were reported in newspaper articles. These are available on Trove one being The Melbourne Herald 17 April 1931. The Argus 17 April 1931 also reported the speeches and resulting resolution.

At the following branch meeting **Mrs. Kennedy reported on the annual conference in Melbourne and stated that a hearty response had been received to the appeal for clothing and "no needy family should now be without adequate clothing for the winter"**. The CWA of Victoria started Mallee Relief where branches from all over Victoria donated food and clothing to assist the cold and hungry in the Mallee and petitioned the Government to improve the "coupon system for sustenance".

Elizabeth was instrumental in a campaign for reduced medical fees for medical and dental treatment at the local hospital. There were many children in the area who had nose, throat and dental problems whose parents could not afford to pay for treatment.

When the depression reached its peak in 1933 and the cost of producing a bag of wheat was more than the price received combined with rabbit and mouse plagues the Kennedy's made



the difficult decision to surrender their farms after 13 years of toil sweat and tears along with 75% of other Soldier Settlers.

The Kennedy family then made the long trip to Cairns in Far North Queensland. It took four months and was as far away from the Mallee as they could get. They finally settled on a share farm in Ingham and then onto their own cane farm.

When WW2 started Jim was called back to his unit so sold up the farm and the family returned to Melbourne by sea. The two older sons joined the airforce. Jim returned to his unit and the Commanding Officer was eager to get him ready to deploy with the unit overseas, but due to the damage to his legs, he was rejected as medically unfit. He was offered a position at Home Service Army but decided to go and work at the ammunitions factory instead.

My father Maurice tried several "city" jobs but after growing up on a farm found it hard to settle into factory work. He decided to join the Army instead. Grandpa (Jim), remembering his experiences in WW1 refused to sign the enlistment forms for Maurice to join the Army so Maurice lied about his age and joined anyway.

After WW2 Elizabeth and Jim returned to Queensland and cane farming. Elizabeth continued her community work volunteering for the Red Cross. In their later years they moved to Taree NSW and lived on a dairy farm. Elizabeth was involved in the CWA of NSW and Red Cross. She was awarded Life Membership of Red Cross and passed away in 1975.

OUR CWA SERVICE WOMEN

JOY LOWRY

The 'facts'

Name: Joy Lowry

CWA Branch: Tallangatta

Dates of CWA membership: I joined CWA 12 years ago

Year and place of birth: 1959, Albury NSW. Not far from here. Dad was in the Army at Bandiana when I was born.

Occupation at time of enlistment: I was a shop Assistant at Dimmey's in Ringwood.

Date, place of enlistment and age: 4 September 1979; Melbourne. I was 19 (hmm sounds like a song).

Parent Unit: Women's Royal Australian Navy (WRANs)

Military Occupation: Cook

Date of discharge: 17 January 1981 – the day I got married. In those days it was strongly suggested that you get out of the navy. Husbands and wives were not posted to the same cities let alone the same bases.

Service experience

I served with some amazing people both men and women who taught me a lot. I started at HMAS Cerberus (near Crib Point, Vic) and then was posted to HMAS Albatross (near Nowra NSW). I don't remember being homesick at all. My parents were just up the road at East Doncaster and I loved adventure.

The best is the fact that I am still in contact with a lot of the girls I signed up with. We had a reunion in 2019 for our 40th anniversary.

Of course, I didn't leave the Navy when I got married, I just didn't work for them anymore as I married a sailor.

What was your experience as a woman serving in the armed forces?

I loved it. There were good times and bad of course.

The training was great. We were taught how to march, how to salute, how to speak Navy slang (yes I still use a lot of it). They also tried to teach us to be ladies. That was fine until we started to work with sailors. They were very chauvinistic in those days and when we were in recruit school, we were told we should never carry anything heavier than our handbags. That went out the window as we had to do the same as the men – so carry 50kg of potatoes, 20 kg bags of onions and big heavy pots.

A lot of the senior NCO's were old school. WRANs are only there for one thing and that is to do pays. They shouldn't be anywhere else in the navy.

At Albatross I had a great Leading Cook. He took me under his wing and helped me grow a lot. We worked together in the Main Galley (Junior Sailors Mess) and then in the Wardroom (Officers Mess). We had a lot of fun in the Wardroom as we did some



really big 'dos' where you are catering for people from the Captain and the local parliamentarians to locals who have the farm next door to the base. Some of the officers were of course duty (working) so couldn't go to the do, so John and I would always do something special for them. If we were weekend duty and it was a long weekend or special occasion, we again would do something special for the ones who were duty.

We also at the time I was at Albatross had some bad bushfires nearby. We went in early and opened up to serve breakfast to the sailors going to fight the fires and also make 500 sandwiches for them to take with them. When they got back a couple of them told us that there was no other food on the fireground, so they were glad of the sandwiches.

Being a cook, you were taught how to do everything from bread to roasts. Our graduation lunch was a 10-course buffet which had to be ready on time and of course well cooked. We were also taught how to look after a galley in rough weather (even though as WRANs we didn't go to sea). We were taught how to put out an oil fire using water, a big no no if you don't know how. You will cause it to spread.

How has your military service shaped your life after that time?

It taught me resilience. I can pack up my house and move to the other side of the country very easily.

I bought my daughters up to believe that they can do anything, they can be anything they like. There is no job too big or too small – from cleaning out toilets to being Prime Minister.

I still call officers Sir. There was one I would meet often when we lived in Darwin and I would greet him with a hug and still call him Sir. He would tell me off every time. NCOs I would call PO or Chief. It took me a long time to get out of that habit.

I am very time conscious. If you aren't 5 minutes early you are 10 minutes late. I hate late people; it just gets on my nerves. I am always at least 5 to 10 minutes early. The driver even had to drive around the block on my wedding day as I was early.

Anything you would like to add?

I look back now and would do it all again. Only after we got married, I would have stayed in because only 12 months after we got married they started posting husbands and wives together.

VICKIE FORSYTH

Name: Vickie Forsyth

CWA Branch: Mount Macedon Moonlighters (Previously in the Macedon Branch)

Dates of CWA Membership: Joined 2018

Place of Birth: Townsville, Queensland

Occupation at time of Enlistment:

A swimming instructor at the Tobruk Swimming Pool. I was a Learn to Swin instructor who assisted coaching the Club Teams in the afternoons.

Date, Place of Enlistment and Age: 6 November 1978 and I was 19 years old. We were flown to Brisbane from Townsville and I stayed overnight at a Salvation Army premises with 15 – 20 other young women from Queensland. Looking back, it was probably not the best accommodation for young women – staying with a lot of older homeless men – but we somehow survived the experience unscathed. We then were flown to Melbourne and transported by bus to HMAS Cerberus where the initial training including 6 weeks WRANS training in which we learnt about the navy, how to march, about the uniform, and then I went on to do category training in which I learnt a variety of morse code training, touch typing and also radio transmission and receiver training. For morse code, you initially needed to be at 12 words per minute, but the required speed increased as you moved on. You needed to be able to do 18 words per minute to be designated as a Radio Operator Special which rating I achieved. I was then transferred to HMAS Harman in Canberra, where I needed to be proficient at 25 words per minute in morse code, both writing and typing. We needed to learn many other skills as well.

Parent Unit: HMAS Morton in Brisbane

Military Occupation: Communications & Intelligence

Date of Discharge: 6 April 2017, after a 38+ year career in the Navy.

Story – a brief commentary of your service experience:

I joined because of the economic situation at that time in Australia. I originally thought I would be a teacher, but a lot of teachers (and other workers) were being laid off at the time so my father thought I should get a job where they trained you to learn a skill while you were being paid. I was paid when I joined up – including while I was being trained.

The sister of a good friend of mine from school was in the navy at that time, and she would talk to us about it. She seemed to be having a good time in the navy.

When I joined the navy, women didn't go to sea at that time. The first sea-going WRANS were in 1984. It was pretty difficult for women going to sea in the early days – there was discrimination, bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment and not just of women. I wanted to train to be a Physical Training Instructor but at the time, although I was very fit, I didn't have enough upper body strength. At that time, you needed to be under 25 years old to be a Physical Training Instructor and I just missed out (though 5 years later they removed the age limit).

I did go to sea after I asked to do so. I probably should have gone earlier in my career, but I got to go to sea and performed a variety of roles (everyone had a secondary role while at sea). I had numerous postings and travelled to a range of places both all over

Australia and overseas, and took part in various exercises.

Between branches there is a lot of competition and being in Intelligence, unlike other units – you can't talk about what you have done etc. People called us "Spooks".

I got to play a lot of competitive sport in the Navy including playing water polo and volleyball (including overseas) with the Navy. I loved this.

I don't regret a moment of my sea experience. Some of it was horrid at the time (like being sea sick) but a lot of it was pretty terrific like the places you travelled to and the great friendships you made. I met my partner in the Navy. I had many wonderful experiences.

I also worked recruiting people including in some of the more remote indigenous communities that few people have the opportunity to visit. All three armed services are desperate for smart, clever people.

What was your experience as a woman serving in the armed forces?

A lot of women left the navy after no more than about 10 years. Not many exceed 20 years, but I was fortunate to stay for over 38 years.

It is better for women now but there are still challenges including discrimination and harassment. Due to my security background I also spent time with the

Military Police investigations unit for a while.

How has your military service shaped your life after that time?

You are contributing – doing a service and this stays with you. I am still amazed on Anzac Day when people come up to thank you for your service. This continues to be appreciated by community members and sometimes you forget this.

While I was still in the Navy, I was curious about joining the CWA and went as far as going to a branch in Canberra. The woman I spoke to was very dismissive about a servicewoman being a CWA member, due to the constant moving and relocation. She said I should wait until I left the navy and, of course, that was a long time later after when I moved to Mount Macedon. But both organisations are about service.

Anything you would like to add?

I was very fortunate and had many great experiences that other people don't get to experience. It was also very, very tough. It's competitive and there are others – including other servicewomen – who don't want you to succeed. But ultimately I had some terrific experiences, and made many wonderful friendships.



CWA INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION AT UMINA

THEME: COUNT HER IN

On 12th March 2024, the Association was delighted to host a stunning celebration marking International Women's Day 2024.

Due to looming rain, we needed to relocate our planned Garden Party indoors, but the showers which ensued certainly didn't place a dampener on what proved to be an inspiring evening loved by our audience of members and non-members alike.

Special Guest panellists, who generously shared their insights, experiences and career highs and challenges, included:

- The Honourable Justice Lesley Taylor of the Victorian Court of Appeal
- President of the Victorian Farmers Federation Emma Germano
- Award Winning Journalist and Author Sue Smethurst

Special thanks to Club Chair Karen Jackson for producing the most stunning finger-food for guests to enjoy at the event (and to Shelagh Dawson and Chris for their assistance in the kitchen on the night); to Event Facilitator Amanda Millar and to all who supported and helped to run the event.



Club Chair Karen Jackson



Event Guests: Katie Paynter (Seftons), Amanda Millar, Jillian Hawkins, Peg Higginbottom, Executive Director Lynne Jordan and Federal Member for Higgins Dr Michelle Ananda-Rajah MP



The Honourable Justice Lesley Taylor with State President Jenny Nola



Sarah Barnbrook Joanne Alderman and Sally-Ann Matthews



IWD Event with Jenny Nola, The Hon. Justice Taylor, Sue Smethurst and Emma Germano



Jenny Tuck Prudence McCredden Margaret Maxwell



IWD Panellists with State President Jenny Nola

AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT



Margaret Wood
Chairman Agriculture & Environment

Our oceans are so precious to our planet, but we are systematically destroying them.

It is up to all of us to look to the future and make sure we can revive and look after them to secure their future. Think of all the life that the ocean is home to, I'm sure if it was your home you wouldn't think of doing all what is happening to it, following are some of the statistics that are happening to the ocean.

We're surrounded by plastic. It's in the single use packaging we discard, the consumer goods that fill our stores, and in our clothing, which sheds microplastic fibres in the wash.

In the first decade of this century, we made more plastic than all the plastic in history up to the year 2000. And every year, billions of pounds of *more* plastic end up in the world's oceans. Studies estimate there are now 15–51 trillion pieces of plastic in the world's oceans — from the equator to the poles, from Arctic ice sheets to the sea floor. Not one square mile of surface ocean anywhere on earth is free of plastic pollution.

The problem is growing into a crisis. The fossil fuel industry plans to *increase plastic production* by 40 percent over the next decade. These oil giants are rapidly building petrochemical plants across the United States to turn fracked gas into plastic. This means more toxic air pollution and plastic in our oceans.

Unfortunately, plastic is so durable that the EPA reports “every bit of plastic ever made still exists.” All five of the Earth's major ocean gyres are inundated with plastic pollution. The largest one has been dubbed the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

THE GREAT PACIFIC GARBAGE PATCH

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is a gyre of plastic debris in the north-central Pacific Ocean. It's the largest accumulation of plastic in the world. Just how big is it? Using the map below, click and drag around the garbage patch (shown in red.) If you're on mobile, zoom in and use two fingers to drag more easily.

REFERENCES

Centre for Biological Diversity (2023) Oceans Plastics Pollutions. https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/ocean_plastics/#:~:text=THE%20PLASTIC%20PROBLEM&text=And%20every%20year%2C%20billions%20of,sheets%20to%20the%20sea%20floor.

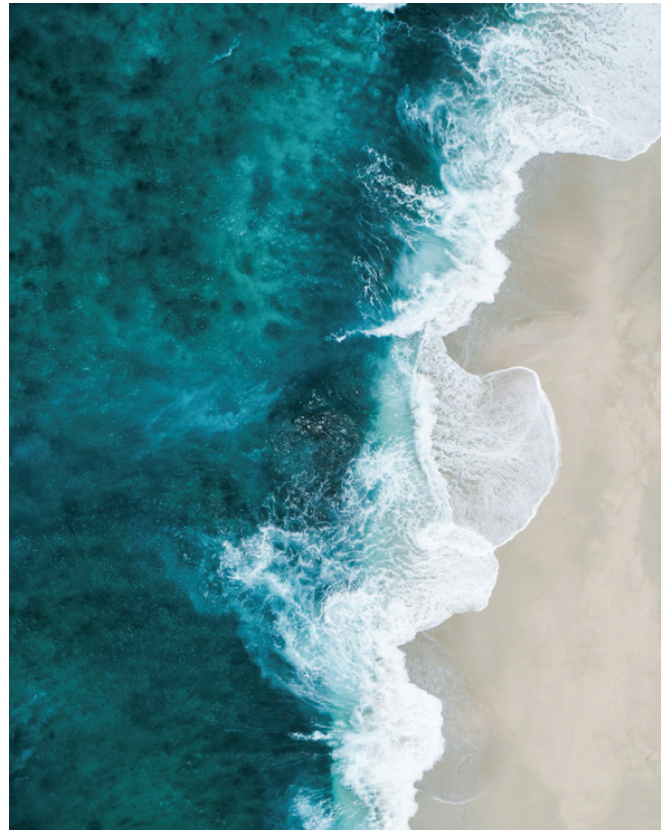




Photo by Shifaaz shamoon on Unsplash

Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.
Mornington Peninsula Group





51st ANNUAL
Creative Arts Exhibition

Peninsula Community Theatre
Cnr Nepean Hwy & Wilsons Rd, Mornington
Saturday 27 & Sunday 28 April 10am-4pm

Stalls and Raffle
Devonshire Teas & Refreshments Available

Admission - Adults \$8
Weekend ticket \$12
Children under 14 accompanying an adult FREE

Thank you to Mornington Peninsula Shire Council for their ongoing support

 @CWAMorningtonPeninsula 

PRESERVES MASTERCLASS

On 17th February this year, the Creative Arts Committee tried something new – we opened our Masterclass Preserving workshop up to the public. We advertised only through our Facebook page, and were delighted to find the class was filled well before the cut off date. There were a few disappointed members who tried to book in the days before the class, but unfortunately both the class and the wait list were full.

We had 14 in the class, 8 of whom were non-members (although 2 of those have now joined!). So together with her trusty Sous Chef Yvonne Khriiss, Marie Vassallo, our multi-skilled State Treasurer, walked the class through the dark arts of preserving.



The class found it amusing that our first hands-on activity was pureeing and separating the tomatoes to make passata, and we were doing it outside. It soon became apparent why!



Photos courtesy of Brock (used with permission)

After a wonderful morning tea from Ada and Viv, back to work. More chopping as everyone assisted in making a large batch of “Aussie tomato sauce” and a batch of blackberry jam.

After a lovely lunch on the verandah, it was back to work. There was still marmalade to make, sauce to bottle, bread and butter pickles to finish and preserved lemons to get started!

Suddenly it was 4:30 pm and time for everyone to go home and for Marie and Ada D’Alescanda to finish the dishes. Thanks to Josie and her husband for helping to put the tables back and for Brock for his amazing photographs!

It was quite a day! Lots of tips shared, laughter and everyone went home with 2 bottles and 4 jars of delicious preserves using 6 different techniques, all the recipes and a few stories to tell.



CREATIVE ARTS



Mary Grant

Creative Arts Chairman

The days are getting shorter and Autumn just around the corner. Time to get out the knitting needles and crochet hooks and start creating articles suitable to sell at markets, Melbourne Royal and Sovereign Hill Harvest Festival. Knitted babies jackets, jumpers, beanies are always sought after, particularly at the Melbourne Show.

CWA has been invited to be part of Sovereign Hill's Harvest Festival May 25/26 2024. This is an exciting venture where we will provide craft demonstrations and presentations on Home Industry topics over the weekend.

We are desperately short of Home Industry judges. If you are interested in training as a judge in this area, training will be held **Saturday 29/ Sunday 30th June** 9.30 am – 4.00pm each day. If you are interested please contact me so I can add your name to the list. Email: chaircreative@cwaofvic.org.au

Mobile: 0439712311

Other training dates, for new judges are:

17/18 May Session 3 Handcrafts

14/15 June Session 1 Handcrafts

20/21 July Session 2 Handcrafts

24/25 August Session 3 Handcrafts

Most important if you missed any handcraft training in 2023, you must attend one of the session 3 dates.

More importantly, a reminder to accredited judges that if you miss this year's updates, it is very important that you attend the 2025 updates for you to remain accredited.

We had very good attendances at the Preserves workshop facilitated by Marie Vassallo.

CREATING GOOGLY EYES FROM BLISTER PACK PILL PACK

- 1 Collect clear blister pill packs, leave intact.
- 2 Create black circles from a paper punch
- 3 Place 1 black circle in each pill section.
- 4 Paste a white piece of cardboard on the back.
- 5 Separate sections and you now have googly eyes in all shapes and sizes.

PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD FOR:

Decorated Mother's Day bikkies April 27th

Advanced Felting and Slow Stitching July 6th

For further information on these workshops, please visit the CWA web page.

"Waste not want not" was my late Mum's mantra to her family.

What do you do with old worn denim jeans? Create a Repurposed Denim Wall Organizer!

1. Find a solid backing board, cut denim to fit over and around the edges, but don't secure it just yet
2. Remove pockets off old jeans.
3. Arrange on denim backing and stitch into place for added strength. Could be glued.
4. Secure on backing board, add a hanger at back and voila! – a "handy hold it all" for sewing items, small gardening tools, seeds, above your desk. The uses are endless!

Til next time, Happy crafting and baking

VICTORIA
The Country Women's
Association of Victoria Inc.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS GROUP
**CREATIVE
ARTS
EXHIBITION
2024**

**20-21
APRIL**

SATURDAY 10.00AM-4.00PM
SUNDAY 10.00AM-3.00PM
**AWARDS PRESENTATION
SATURDAY 11.00AM**

MORNING, AFTERNOON
TEA AND LUNCH
AVAILABLE
CRAFT DE-STASH AND
PRESERVES STALL

ENTRY
\$5

**LANCEFIELD MECHANICS
INSTITUTE**
3435 HIGH ST LANCEFIELD

CHILDREN UNDER 16 ADMITTED FREE
CONTACT US FOR DETAILS:
CWACENTRALHIGHLANDSGROUP
@GMAIL.COM

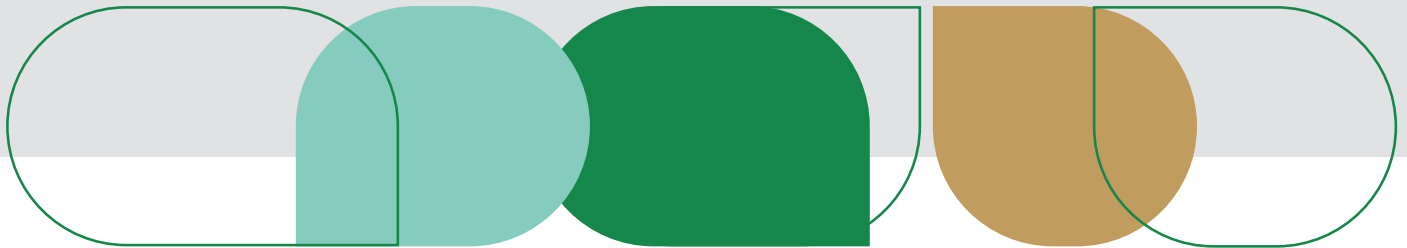


The Country Women's
Association of Victoria Inc.

care **empower** contribute

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2028



VISION

Our vision is for communities where all women, children and families are safe, supported and can realise their potential.



PURPOSE

The Purpose of our Association is to provide assistance and support to women, children and families who are facing disadvantage or vulnerability, throughout metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas in Victoria.

WE ACHIEVE OUR PURPOSE BY BEING



INCLUSIVE

Welcoming all women in our diverse communities, we look out for each other, value fun and friendship, and seek to be kind to one another.



OPTIMISTIC

We believe that women, children and families can be safe and self-reliant, with the skills needed to reach their potential.



COLLABORATIVE

We can achieve more as an organisation than any one individual. We build networks of support and work to understand, address and advocate on issues impacting the communities we serve.



TRANSPARENT

We believe that internal transparency and clear guidelines strengthen our Association.



COMMITTED

We are purposeful, tenacious and courageous in everything we do.

DECISION-MAKING PRINCIPLES OF THE ASSOCIATION

Purpose

Our activities provide assistance and support to women, children and families who are facing disadvantage or vulnerability, throughout metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas in Victoria.

Inspire and promote

Branches, members and other stakeholders are inspired by our priorities, are keen to respond and can be provided with accessible structures or processes to do so.

Financial sustainability and efficiency

When we consider the costs and benefits, the numbers stack up. We are transparent on cost-benefits and seek to work smarter not harder.

Reputation

We seek to grow and protect our reputation in all projects and partnerships, in ways that are non-partisan and non-sectarian.

Capacity

Our capability, workload and accountability are sufficient, compliant, manageable and sustainable.

Risk assessment

We only take on operational, reputational and financial risks that are acceptable and can be managed.

STRATEGIC GOALS 2024-2028



POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACT

By 2028, we will increase our recognition as a relevant and credible contributor to social change.

ACTION PRIORITIES

- ✓ Develop our purposeful, collaborative advocacy role. Develop our methodology and deliver an advocacy agenda in line with our purpose, strengths and partnerships with allied organisations. This includes partner organisations in Victoria and Country Women's Association's in other States and Territories.
- ✓ Develop a Contributions Map to identify key causes supported by the CWA of Victoria, inclusive of local Branches. Organise and promote ways for members to maximise their impact at local community, regional and wider levels.



A VISIBLE PRESENCE IN VICTORIA

By 2028, we will maintain a strong community presence and be visible - celebrating our successes. We will elevate our image, making it clear that we value traditional skills and community supports but are 'more than tea and scones'. By 2028, external stakeholders, partners and members of the wider community will have a better understanding of what we do.

ACTION PRIORITIES

- ✓ Develop and implement a Communications Plan for internal and external audiences - developed, delivered, monitored and regularly updated, in line with brand guidelines. This covers mailings, event promotions, website and all relevant traditional and social media platforms. It also includes work to ensure external stakeholders and partners gain a better understanding of what we do.
- ✓ Review and refresh major events and projects to elevate the image of the CWA of Victoria.



ENHANCED MEMBER EXPERIENCE

By 2028, we will be contemporary, using fit-for-purpose technology, and satisfy our members regarding how we engage them. We will continue to offer community connectivity – maintaining our breadth and reach across metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas.

We will be inclusive - demonstrating a culture of respect and welcome - without fear of criticism. Our membership and support will be growing and our footprint of support through financial and goods in kind will show this.

ACTION PRIORITIES

- ✓ Deliver simpler processes and guidelines, both on and offline, inclusive of Branches, that are fit-for-purpose and accessible to all members.
- ✓ Deliver a membership development plan to strengthen our member value proposition - making it easy to join and attractive to stay.
- ✓ Re-organise CWA of Victoria information and key documents in one online location, to make them more easily accessible to members.
- ✓ Strengthen and update the knowledge, skills and confidence of members in leadership and co-ordination roles, through planned activities each year.
- ✓ Ensure all processes and systems enable us to comply with legal and regulatory requirements and protect our legacy. This covers, but is not limited to, the requirements of the ATO, Australian Charities & Not-for- Profits Commission (ACNC), Consumer Affairs Victoria and digitisation of records to protect our history and cyber security.



WELL GOVERNED AND FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE

By 2028, we will demonstrate flexibility and adaptability with fit for purpose governance.

We will be set up for the future with regards to costs and revenue, infrastructure, staff and employment matters, volunteer management and support processes. We will plan, set targets, measure and report on progress.

ACTION PRIORITIES

- ✓ Deliver simpler processes and guidelines, both on and offline, inclusive of Branches, that are fit-for-purpose and accessible to all members.
- ✓ Deliver a membership development plan to strengthen our member value proposition - making it easy to join and attractive to stay.
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ABOUT THE CWA OF VICTORIA

- We are a registered charity and an Association for women of all ages – metropolitan, rural, regional and remote.
- We support communities including a focus on friendship, personal development and advocacy.
- We encourage advocacy on social issues, sustainable development and protection of the environment.
- We work with all levels of government to support communities.
- With over 4,000 members and nearly 250 branches in Victoria, our members generate over \$30M per year through fundraising and producing goods and services in kind to benefit Victorian women, children and families facing disadvantage or vulnerability.
- The CWA of Victoria was formed on 12 March 1928 and is a member of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW).

WHAT WE DO



OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

This Strategic Plan is the result of extensive consultation with members and key external stakeholders. Inputs informing our Strategic Plan were captured through:

- ✓ 2,000 comments received from more than 450 delegates attending the 2023 State Conference
- ✓ Five face-to-face workshops involving 164 members representing 95 Branches
- ✓ Consultation Packs distributed to Groups and Branches
- ✓ 824 responses from an online survey
- ✓ An online consultation session attended by members, and
- ✓ Ongoing consultation with State Council.

✉ reception@cwaofvic.org.au

📍 3 Lansell Road, Toorak Vic 3142

📞 (03) 9827 8971

We respect First Nations Elders past, present and future and acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of First Nations peoples of the lands on which our members meet, and commit to building a brighter future together.

www.cwaofvic.org.au

MEMBERSHIP



Gwen White
Membership Committee
Chair

Greetings from the membership committee. As we move into the autumn months days will become shorter and the weather much cooler. At the time of writing, it is 37degrees and I look forward to cooler days but I relish the long days that daylight saving gives us.

Group AGMs have been completed and I wish to thank the Fraser, Mornington Peninsula and McDonald groups for their very warm welcome when I attended their meetings. Members were kind, respectful and offered considered comments for me to take back to the office.

Since branch AGMs last spring we have seen the closure of 3 branches and a few go into recess which gives the Membership Committee some areas for us to look into helping branches remain within the organisation. It is important that we continue to assist branches in growing their membership numbers and I urge all branches to make contact with the committee or myself and seek help and assistance in your endeavours. We are happy to visit your area and do a promotion – perhaps an afternoon tea etc to talk about CWA in your community. I am happy to visit a branch meeting and get acquainted with your members.

How many of you have visited the website and checked out the ‘toolkit’? It really is wonderful and offers you all the opportunity to personalise your pamphlets, cards etc with photos and details of your branch. So easy to run off a few copies to have on hand.

While attending AGMs I made up a small ‘welcome pack’ and asked branches attending ‘what do you give a new member when they join’? My small bag contained a CWA magazine, a lanyard, branch syllabus, pen, small notebook, small compassion heart (which we make for a local hospital to give to each patient), package of tissues. Perhaps a CWA badge could be included. Some branches give their new member a welcome letter and details about CWA.

These are just a few ideas. Keep it simple and don’t overload the member with too much paperwork. Perhaps assign another member as a support person to sit and explain as things move through your meeting. Above all **make the new member feel welcome, valued and wanted.**

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

As of the 15 February we have:

New members	215
Current branches	276
Full membership total	3,363
Total Life members	77
Junior members	191
Disbanded branches	2

Please remember the committee is only a phone call or email away and will endeavour to help you on the journey to growing your membership. Perhaps you might like to share the story of how your branch has grown in numbers – would love branches to share ideas with us.

At the time of writing Easter is only a few weeks away and I’m sure you will have shared chocolate with loved ones and enjoyed time with family.

i look forward to meeting up and having a conversation with you at the state AGM and conference. Come and visit us at the membership table. Till next time

CLUB REPORT



Karen Jackson
Club Chairman

As I write this I cannot comprehend that my two years as Club Chair is fast approaching the end. It has been a wonderful journey. The friendships that have developed over the years are amazing. To all those

that have helped, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I have travelled many a kilometre clocking up 27,632kms. Been away from home for 574 days.

My thanks must also go to Yark Branch for all the work that they did for the POPUP Shop when I was recovering from COVID in February. They supplied 4 boxes of pickles, jams and relishes. Thanks.

As we are now in Autumn, I thought that I would share a recipe that I stole from a friend (thanks Edwina).

QUICK AND EASY SOUP

- 1 box of beef stock
 - 1 packet of chopped soup vegetables
 - 1 tin of tomatoes
 - 1 jar of medium salsa
 - 1 packet of ravioli
- Place all the above in a saucepan and cook.
Serve with garlic bread ENJOY



Photo by Fusco Studio on Unsplash



The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.

care **empower** contribute

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE 96TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC.
WILL BE HELD AT VICTORIA PAVILION, ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA EPSOM
ROAD, ASCOT VALE
ON FRIDAY 31 MAY 2024 AT 10.00 AM**

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

- NATIONAL ANTHEM
- COLLECT
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY
- MEMBER OF HONOUR ELECTION
- CONFIRMATION OF THE 95th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
- STATE TREASURER'S REPORT
- RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT
- ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING THE AUDITOR FOR 2024
- STATE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS Jennifer Nola
- CONFIRMATION OF 2024/2025 STATE PRESIDENT Jennifer Nola
- PRESENTATION OF STATE PRESIDENT'S BADGE
- 2024/2025 GROUP PRESIDENTS
- 2024/2025 BOARD MEMBERS AND STATE OFFICE BEARERS
- RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The Keynote Speaker for the Annual General Meeting
will be The Hon Jacinta Allan, Premier of Victoria

Patron: Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria

96TH STATE AGM AND CONFERENCE AGENDA

VICTORIA PAVILION, ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA
EPSOM ROAD, ASCOT VALE

THEME: ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

This is a snapshot of the agenda highlighting some of the exciting speakers we have already programmed as well as the planned scheduling of Resolutions – MORE TO COME!

FRIDAY, 31 MAY

9.30 am	Doors Open
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Annual General Meeting

10.00 am	Annual General Meeting – refer to Order of Proceedings Keynote Speaker – The Hon Jacinta Allan, Premier of Victoria
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12.00 pm	Lunch Break
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State Conference – Theme – Advocating for Change

Our Theme this year highlights one of the main items raised in our Strategic Plan consultations held with members.

From our Conference Opening Address by Ro Allen, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner, and throughout Friday and Saturday, we will hear more about Food Security, Homelessness and Engaging with Young People, as our areas of Advocacy which were endorsed by State Council. Cath Smith of Changesmith Consulting will again lead us in robust discussions about what makes advocacy successful. We will weave our Resolutions through our State Conference.

1.00 pm	Conference Session 1 – includes: Guest Speaker: Ro Allen, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner Advocacy Part 1- Cath Smith (Changesmith Consulting) Thanksgiving Fund 2024- Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute Resolution 1 – Deductible Gift Recipient Regulations
5.00 pm	Finish

State Dinner

6.45 pm	Doors Open
7.00 pm	State Dinner

SATURDAY, 1 JUNE

8.30 am	Doors Open
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State Conference – Theme – Advocating for Change

9.00 am	Conference Session 2- includes: Resolution 2 – HECS/HELP Loans Advocacy Part 2- Cath Smith (Changesmith Consulting)
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10.30 am	Morning Tea
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11.00 am	Conference Session 3 – includes: Advocacy Part 3- Cath Smith (Changesmith Consulting) Resolution 3 – Fuel Reduction Burns Resolution 4 – Accessibility of Extreme/ Graphic Digital Content by children in Australia
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12.30 pm	Lunch Break
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1.30 pm	Conference Session 4 – includes: GP Badge Ceremony Thanksgiving Fund 2023 – Women’s Housing Ltd Resolution 5 – Disclosure requirements for the commercial use of digital editing and artificial intelligence productions.
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4.00 pm	Conference Closes
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Delegates and Observers are requested to be seated 15 minutes before the commencement time of each session and the Annual General Meeting.

STATE CONFERENCE GENERAL RESOLUTIONS 2024

RESOLUTION 1

MOVED: Central Highlands Group

SECONDED: Social Issues Committee

That the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. supports the recommendations of the Productivity Commission in recommending that the Federal Government overhaul the Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) regulations to introduce a more streamlined and transparent process for determining which charities can receive tax-deductible donations.

Supporting Statement

Given the complexity of the current DGR regulations, an estimated 15,000 – 20,000 Australian charitable organisations – including the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. – are currently missing out on the benefits of tax deductible gift status to increase philanthropic donations to support their charitable work and contributions to the community. The recommendations of the Productivity Commission would lead to approximately 20,000 additional charitable organisations become the recipient of an increased funding flow from philanthropic sources – encouraging more Australians to donate to charities each year. Increasing funding from both corporate and individual donors would open the door to new funding partnerships and has the additional benefit of reducing reliance on government income sources.

RESOLUTION 2

MOVED: Central Highlands Group

SECONDED: Social Issues Committee

That the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. calls on the Federal Government to remove indexation on tertiary students' HECS/HELP loans to enable young Australians to more quickly repay their HECS/HELP debts.

Supporting Statement

While the principle of students making a financial contribution towards the costs of tertiary degrees which will enable higher earnings across their lifetimes is appropriate and fiscally reasonable – the concept of indexing those loans to maintain the "real cost" of the loan has led to young Australians being increasingly despondent about the prospect of ever achieving the long-standing Australian dream of owning their own homes. Currently student debts are reassessed in June each year and indexed according to the CPI – thereby increasing the cost of the debt each year. Removing indexation would mean that students would continue to repay the actual cost of their HECS/HELP loan over time at a minimum rate of 1% in additional taxation once they earn a salary above the minimum repayment threshold (currently \$51,550 per annum for 2023 – 2024) – but the level of the debt would not be increased each year via the indexation.

RESOLUTION 3

MOVED: Omeo/Tambo Valley Group

SECONDED: Margaret Wood, Chair, Agriculture and Environment Committee

That the Victorian State Government adhere to the recommendations of the 2009 Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission and increase fuel reduction burning in Victoria.

Supporting Statement

Reduction in the fuel load, carried out strategically, can reduce the momentum of fires and thus the degree of environmental devastation, agricultural loss and the enormous mental anguish of those impacted by fires. Bushfire recovery has proved to be a vital but very expensive process. It is critical that the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action invest more in fire preparedness and prevention.

The Association urges the Victorian State Government to implement more effective programs for reducing the fuel load on public lands through increasing fuel reduction burn targets.

RESOLUTION 4

MOVED: Hume Goulburn Group

SECONDED: Marilyn Tangey, Chair, Community and International Support Committee

That the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. urges both Federal and State Governments to strengthen the legislative framework in relation to the accessibility of extreme and/or graphic digital content by children in Australia.

Supporting Statement:

Children and young people under the age of 18 years increasingly have access to large volumes of graphic content via the internet and social media platforms – including in contexts where the child has not sought to access that content. The psychological harm caused by children accessing extreme graphic digital content is well established. This motion calls on all levels of government in Australia to tighten the legislative framework available to prevent the ability of children coming into contact with graphic and extreme digital content.

RESOLUTION 5

MOVED: Hume Goulburn Group

SECONDED: Amanda Millar, Chair, Communications and Magazine Committee

That the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. urges both Federal and State Governments to develop a legislative framework in relation to disclosure requirements for the commercial use of digital editing and artificial intelligence productions.

Supporting Statement:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) already possesses the ability to complete many tasks faster and more efficiently than the human brain. This brings many opportunities but also some challenges including the ability to alter images via digital editing and artificial intelligence in ways which may not be approved by the subject of those images. This has been seen in particular in relation to public figures who have had photographs containing their image altered and distributed in malicious, disturbing and also pornographic ways. To keep up with the rapidly evolving use of AI, the Association calls on both Federal and State Government to implement some legislative safeguards to ensure that a greater level of disclosure is required and that, where this is breached, there is recourse for an injured party to take action to protect their image and identifiable aspects of their person.

PUZZLE

WORD SEARCH

ODE to a Sausage

ACOLYTES	LEISURE
APRONED	MANLY
AREA	MEN
BABY	MINTED LAME
BAG	MONARCHS
BAKED	MYSTERY
BARBECUE	NOBLE
BRATWURST	ONION
BEER	PAY
BENDER	PLEASURE
BOOMER	PRINCELY
COMPANION	PROTECTIVE
CARPENTARIA	ROLL
CASING	SALAD
CHORIZO	SAVS
COAL	SHRINK
DEITY	SMOKE
FRESH	SNAG
GLOWING	SPICED
HAM	SPLENDOUR
HOBART	SWADDLED
HOMAGE	THEIR
IMPALED	WORTH

M H O B A R T O D E N O R P A G A B
 I M D A L A S N P L E A S U R E B O
 N T O A E R A I C A S I N G T D A L
 T O S N G L S O G E L B O N S E R A
 E B I R A L E N S H R I N K P I B O
 D A B M U R O L E I S U R E L T E C
 L K S O P W C W R I E H T E E Y C D
 A E A B O A T H I I A M R G N Y U C
 M D V T B M L A S N K A E A D Y E A
 B D S T U P E E R T G N D M O L H R
 M Y S T E R Y R D B H L N O U E H P
 B L S F S P I C E D M Y E H R C A E
 E L N N N E M B P A Y T B P U N M N
 E O O S A W S W A D D L E D D I B T
 R R K P N G L O W O R T H A C R Y A
 C A M P A N I O N D E K O M S P B R
 F R E S H M P R O T E C T I V E A I
 S E T Y L O C A C O Z I R O H C B A

ANSWERS KITCHEN PRAYER

D E D R E A M I N G H G U O H T L A
 P W O B O O T S S S P E C A L T A Y
 A C A E T H E E N T L L A T E T H A
 N M T S A D N I M B O A C W A H L Y
 S E U M H G N I O D R R D A S E L T
 T D D E B I S F C K C O M N E Y O E
 O I N A D S N E L L C F N I A M V A
 A T I L A R C G H O A A R J N S E R
 C A F S W D M U S T O N L A M G L T
 C T B K N T H I N G S R R B A K Y H
 E I G H D M A R T H A S W C R T M W
 P O A L E E G E T T I N G F Y O M A
 T N T P N A S A T R O D H T U P O L
 W D E P L G V W A T C H I N G S R O
 W F S T O A H E J T H G I L K H E R
 O G S E T T L N M S C R U B O T D
 H H A N D S S E N S O P S R T E H D
 B K T T I M E C S S A I N T D S B P



Photo by Satyawan Narinedhat on Unsplash

AUTUMN FOOD ON A BUDGET



Jane Dewildt
Deputy Editor

Autumn is my favourite season.

The weather is one of the major reasons. I'm more a fan of cold than heat (just as well I hear those of you who know I live in Ballarat saying) so the arrival of the 'nip in the air' that is so typical of sunny crisp autumn mornings is a great relief and a promise of things to come.

With the enervating effects of heat gone, nature is telling us it's the time to prepare for winter including adding the nourishing, warming dishes to the menu that will keep us healthy and happy. Today making that happen is not anything like the daunting but essential task it was for our mothers and grandmothers. We have the 'benefit' of year round availability of most produce, a vast array of ready to eat meals temptingly laid out in supermarket freezers or delivered to the door after a few taps on a mobile phone app.

But convenience comes at a cost – not surprising when you consider that every time you buy prepared meals or meal kits you are buying the time spent by the workers preparing them as well as the produce that went into its manufacture. So for most of us, balancing the budget will mean doing the work ourselves for some if not almost all of the time.

For me, that's a pleasurable and engaging activity.

I like almost all aspects of the work involved in feeding myself, my friends and my family comforting autumn and winter dishes. The planning is fun. Fossicking in the dark corners of the pantry to see what tag ends of the staple foods like dried peas and beans, lentils of various colours, dried noodles, rice, grains and pasta are still 'in date' before writing a shopping list can yield treasures and save a surprising amount when you are restocking. Learning to make dishes that focus on these staple ingredients and use the more expensive perishables like meat, poultry and fish to add flavour, interest and specific nutrients is also a way to save. If I'm in the right mood even cleaning up can be satisfying, though I do want to know who made the rule that the items most likely to be hard to clean can't go in the dishwasher and are probably too big for the sink.

One of the things I like to do is choose a key ingredient and do an internet search for recipes that might be a bit different from what I've cooked before, can be cut down to become a recipe for one, or is easily adaptable to oven cookery which given my limited capacity to stand and walk is now absolutely my preferred method.

Our 2024 Product/Resource – pulses – is one of the 'stars' of autumn cooking. So I took to the tablet and began my search for something a bit different to the pea and ham soup, cassoulet and minestrone that I cook quite often. I could not believe my luck when 'Smoky Romanian Bean Stew' popped up. Country of Study and Product in one recipe!

As well as the recipe, which we have been given permission by the recipe's author to reprint here along with her bio, the internet site has a delightful story about the history of the recipe and aspects of rural life in Romania which you might like to read.

Find it here: [Smoky Romanian Bean Stew \(Fasole cu Afumătură\)- Cristina's Kitchen \(cristinaskitchen.com\)](https://cristinaskitchen.com)

ABOUT CRISTINA

I started this blog to share my love of cooking from scratch. I've been tinkering around in the kitchen since I was barely a teenager. I still have vivid memories of the first time I fried an egg- learning to control the gas stove and sputtering hot oil gave me an incredible rush and unlocked a creative outlet that would prove to be my most enduring love.

I was born in Romania in the late 80s. My grandparents were farmers and so I learned from a young age to appreciate whole food ingredients and the kitchen magic we call cooking that takes them from their raw form and turns them into not only food but also cherished memories and traditions.

When I was a kid, Romania was still under communism and it was often said that prepared food purchased from shops (or '*din comerț*') was made with cheap ingredients and couldn't be trusted.

I was skeptical at first but the truth hit me hard after I ate one too many Savarin pastries made with thick, filmy artificial whipped cream that would coat the roof of my mouth in grainy oil. They didn't even taste good - what was the point? It just made me sad.

That was when I learned my second abiding food lesson: if you want to eat well you're best off learning to make it yourself.

The final influence on my food is that my life has unfolded across a lot of different places.

In the early 90s my family fled communist Romania to make a new life in Toronto, where I lived until my mid-20s. Growing up in Toronto exposed me to a lot of different culinary traditions and food cultures- Indian, Polish, Persian, Colombian, Cuban, Jamaican, Italian, Portuguese, Greek...the people and cultures represented by Toronto are truly amazing

Being a third-culture kid I've always felt more at home in diversity and often seek it out. I left Toronto in 2014 and lived in the US for 3 years before moving to Amsterdam, The Netherlands with my husband and our dog Oliver in late 2017.

We're close to a hub airport so my husband and I try to travel often, mostly holiday spots and places we have family and friends- around Europe, the UK, the USA and Canada. Our next big destination will be Japan.

I'm constantly on the lookout for recipe inspiration on these trips and while at home and love sharing new finds on the blog.

Since I'm Romanian you'll find a lot of traditional Romanian recipes. I spent December 2023 perfecting my Romanian cozonac recipe. I made so much cozonac I was giving it away to neighbors just so I could make more. I am really proud of how the recipe turned out and feel like I unlocked an achievement getting it *just right*. I've also posted classics like traditional Romanian cabbage rolls, Romanian stuffed peppers, and (the recipe closest to my heart) smoky Romanian bean stew.

I love soups and stews in general so you'll find a lot in my collection of soup and stew recipes. I can't choose one favorite but besides Smoky Romanian Bean Stew which is on repeat at our house, I can always eat Romanian meatball soup, and when it's cold out I often find myself craving a hearty vegetable and grain soup like chicken and chickpea or chickpea and veg.



Photo by Nathan Dumlaio on Unsplash

SMOKY ROMANIAN BEAN STEW (FASOLE CU AFUMĂTURĂ)



Published: Nov 21, 2020 · Modified: Mar 20, 2024 by Cristina . Reprinted with permission

Smoky Romanian Bean Stew

This smoky Romanian Bean Stew tastes like home and comfort. It calls for just a few basic ingredients, it's versatile so you can use what you have, and it only needs about 5-10 minutes of prep time.

INGREDIENTS

- 2.5 cups white beans (pre-soaked dry beans or substitute 3 small cans)
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 2 yellow onions finely diced
- 2 red peppers finely diced
- 1 cup smoked sausage or substitute other smoked meat of your choice
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon cimbru, summer savoury or substitute thyme*
- 1.5 teaspoons salt or to taste
- Water to cover
- 2 tablespoons fresh dill and parsley finely diced and used for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soak the beans overnight if using dry.
2. Finely dice the onion and dice the peppers.
3. Cut your smoked meat into bite-sized pieces.
4. Sauté the onion and meat in oil on medium-high heat first until beginning to brown.
5. Add everything else and enough water to just cover the beans.
6. Bring to a boil and then reduce to gentle simmer for 40 minutes.
7. Cover with a lid if using dry beans. Don't cover if using canned.
8. After 40 minutes uncover and continue to simmer until reduced to your liking.
9. Garnish with fresh chopped dill or parsley. Serve with crusty bread.

NOTES

* Substitute ½ tablespoon thyme, ½ teaspoon oregano and a ¼ teaspoon fenugreek (if you have it).

This stew is also excellent with potatoes- cut two large potatoes into bite sized pieces and add them along with everything else.

Jane Dewildt
Deputy Editor

GETTING TO KNOW OUR GROUP PRESIDENTS

By the time you have been a CWA of Victoria member for 6 months you will have had at least one opportunity to participate in a Group activity and meet your Group President. But you may not know what her role entails or how and why she has chosen to take on this leadership role in the Association. Hence this feature, in which we aim to:

- acknowledge the great work of Group Presidents as the Association's front line leaders
- raise the profile of the Group President role
- encourage all members to consider taking on leadership roles in the Association beyond the Branch level.

You will see from the articles below that the Group President role can have a different emphasis depending on where in Victoria they are located, how many branches and members there are in the Group, and what is happening across the Association. But at its heart, the role is all about communication and keeping the structures of the Association in touch with each other. That means that our important work for women and children across Victoria can continue to happen effectively.

We asked the Group Presidents who are coming to the end of their current two-year term to contribute to this feature. We sent them some 'prompts' to start their thinking with a focus on challenges and opportunities and what they have learnt while undertaking the role. They didn't get a lot of notice and the realities of 'life' – CWA and every other aspect – meant that not all were able to contribute. The selection of contributions which follow amply demonstrate the range of experiences and the many rewards and challenges that come with the role.

Jane Dewildt
Deputy Editor

PAMELA CROCKETT



Pam Crockett

My time as Fraser Group President has flown by and included listening, communicating, mentoring, learning and opportunities. Whilst being a GP differs from a Branch role, making it work with your other 'life' can take adjustment at first. I balance the role with my 'other life' with branch, community, and personal circles, also travel and roles with the State Membership Committee and with proofreading. State Council attendance has increased my knowledge on how the Association and other Groups work.

When I accepted the role, an aim was to increase co-operation and communication between the branches. One successful initiative has been the establishment of a Quarterly Group Branch Officer Online Roundtable. Branches have swapped ideas, calendars, equipment and invited each other to their events. Fraser Group also publishes a regular online newsletter.

Fraser Group was given an opportunity to nominate a recipient of the Thanksgiving Fund at the 2023 State Conference. *Vacro* was nominated through the Group Roundtable process following consultation with members. On behalf of the Group, I also presented the Official Welcome at the Conference and spoke about Fraser Group's history and provided information about our branches – Ashburton, Boroondara, Port Phillip, Richmond, and Umina.

I have met some wonderful ladies in our organisation as GP and value the advice, suggestions, experiences, and friendship along the way.

As we head towards our Centenary, I am proud to also have three generations of my family as current active members of our Association.

Pamela Crockett
Fraser Group President

Join us to create
connections and
make a difference



The Country Women's
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care empower contribute

LYN TURNER



Lyn Turner

I think I'm the only Group President that has ever written a full page email to the previous Group President, to say why she couldn't take up the role of Group President and then been elected to it...such are the persuasive powers of Marilyn Tangey. However, it has been a rewarding experience, though not without its highs and lows. The rewards have been getting to know the Branch members better from across the Group as well as the broader State CWA members.

The role has given me opportunities to use my skills, learnt over many years in my nurse management role, again. It's a bit like riding a bike you never forget them; you just rechannel them into a different role. My experiences with volunteers also stood me in good stead when taking on this role.

The last two years has broadened my vision of the work that CWA does at the Statewide level. It is easy to focus on the needs of women and children at the local level, but I have been reminded of the bigger picture and role of CWA, particularly being on the Community and International Support Committee.

The links made with Blazead and the support we gave to those volunteers during the 2022 floods is what I consider to be a positive outcome. We supported two camps at Rochester and Bridgewater. This year we also helped with the catering at Goornong for yet another flood disaster.

The biggest challenge is getting through the Annual Meetings and getting documents submitted in a timely manner. As a Group President I have seen members take on roles, which has involved managing the intricacies of end of year reporting. This is demanding, if you have never undertaken an office bearer position. Members need support at this time and things don't always run to the required schedule. Floods, Covid and other illnesses have all played a part in delaying the completion of this reporting.

Marilyn Tangey has left big shoes to fill as I have followed her into the role as Group President. Her commitment to CWA and the additional roles she has taken on over the time I have known her is both inspirational and challenging. Marilyn has a great communication style and is very much a "people's person". She takes time to listen and nothing is too much trouble. Thank you, Marilyn, for being there as a huge support personally and your commitment to CWA.

Lyn Turner
Bendigo Northern Group President

PRUE MCCREDDEN



Prue McCredden

I became a group president in early 2018. I had been group secretary and was very slowly learning the ways of the CWA. No one had nominated for the position before the Group conference and when I was asked, I didn't think twice about it. It was a decision that has enabled me to meet heaps of amazing people, learn some new skills and be grateful to be part of an organisation that does amazing work in the community.

There is nearly 300kms between my most remote branch at Cowangie in the far north west and Murtoa in the south east. I try and visit each of the 7 branches in the Group and their events at least twice a year and I have regular phone and email contact with them all. There is a lot of work keeping in contact with everyone and making sure the information they need gets to the appropriate people, particularly when there are still a lot of people who are not confident computer users.

There is a lot I have learnt about the Association and I am still learning after my second stint as GP for our Group.

There have been many challenges. One is keeping branches open with an ageing membership that still enjoy the fellowship of CWA but do not necessarily have the energy anymore to fundraise as much. Though they do the best they can do and contribute as they can. Part of the answer is getting new members, but with busy lifestyle and smaller populations the challenge is real. It has been a challenge to encourage members to see that CWA membership is 'not all tea and scones'. I have also encouraged nearby groups to share activities as another good way of meeting new people and renewing friendships and skills.

Some branches have had a surge in membership as they have found it a safe haven to learn skills, contribute to community and feel welcome to a group.

There have been some very inspiring members that I have met in my group, from those learning new computer skills to the bags of knitting and craft for the disadvantaged, to getting up in public and presenting secretary's reports, to the quiet way of going about their work for the association in a no fuss way.

I have been very proud of my time as a GP. It's about caring for our community, empowering women and contributing to those that need.

Prue McCredden
Central Wimmera Mallee Group President

AROUND THE BRANCHES

ASHBURTON BRANCH

At our March meeting, we were very lucky to have Helen, from The Victorian Egg Decorators Guild as our guest speaker (after meeting at the Ashburton Festival).

Helen brought along a fabulous display of hand decorated eggs for us to see and gave a fascinating and informative talk about the many styles and processes of decoration they employ.

So much beauty and skill on display. Thank you Helen and @vic.egg.decorators.guild.inc

#cwaashburton
 #thevictorianeggdecoratorsguild
 #craft #handmade #eggdecoration
 #ashburtonfestival



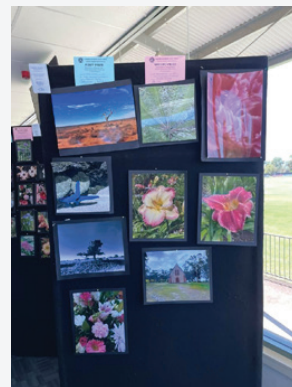
EASTERN GOULBURN VALLEY GROUP

Congratulations to Helen and her merry band of Eastern Goulburn Valley CWA Contributors for a great 2 day Creative Art Exhibition.

So much beautiful work- craft, baking, knitting/crochet, sewing, photography and horticulture /floral art. All first class.

Many thanks to Shepp Sewing Centre for their sponsorship and display. Very much appreciated.

The Devonshire Teas supplied by Bev and kitchen staff was a lovely touch and a chance sit down and do what CWA ladies take very seriously- supporting each other and planning on how to help and care for those in need. Well done all



MORNINGTON BRANCH NEWS

Mornington Branch was so pleased to be able to donate \$2,000 to Mornington Community Support Centres Christmas Appeal, who provide Christmas Lunch to 100 people on Christmas day and presents for the children. Our donations throughout the year also help with food hampers, and essential supplies as well as members cooking for the community café. The services MCSC provide to our community are vital in helping the not so fortunate and those in both financial and emotional need.



ROSEWHITE & DISTRICT

Our branch celebrated International Women's Day tonight (Friday, 8 March) ... with friends sharing bubbles and nibbles followed by watching the movie Ride like a Girl- the true story about Michelle Payne and her life. A very enjoyable film, an emotional story- such a great story about this wonderful young Australian woman.



TARRAWARRA BRANCH

Every year we go out for high tea at Coombe Farm Winery on Oaks day, 9 November 2023. This is our little slice of decadence in our busy world.



BARWON HEADS BRANCH – INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY EVENT

A packed house at the Barwon Heads Branch came to hear inspiring author Rachele Unreich speak about her book, “A Brilliant Life: My Mother’s Inspiring Story of Surviving the Holocaust”.

Women of all ages were intrigued and inspired by Rachele’s mother’s story of positivism surviving the most adverse circumstances imaginable, and her long and eventful life.

The Branch brought a smorgasbord of share plates to delight the tastebuds.



HORSHAM BRANCH

Horsham have been busy with making items for charity and have made donations to the following organizations.

Brendon McKinnon who gives them to Ronald McDonald House, Royal Children’s Hospital and WACK (Wimmera Against Cancer in Kids) as needed.



Photo with Brendon McKinnon, Cathy Issacson, and Bev Shalders.



Grampians Community Health – 18 Teddies. Photo with Komin Earn and Bev Shalders



Wimmera Cancer Center – 8 Knitted Caps

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Design and layout: Debra Thompson
Printed by: Focus Print Group

Their Memory Lives On

JOY ELLEN CATHERINE HOY

Remembering **Joy Ellen Catherine Hoy** (Watson)

9.11.1932- 24.12.2023

Joy began her love of and dedication to the Association when she joined Leongatha Younger Set as a young woman. She rose in that sphere to be elected as State Younger Set Representative (1957-1959).

One of the highlights of this period for Joy was as an observer representing Victoria at the Associated Country Women of the World Triennial Conference in Edinburgh in August 1959. At the time, of course, this entailed a six-week sea journey either side of the conference.

Later, Joy joined the LEONGATHA BRANCH where she held most offices within the branch including President 1980-1982 and Secretary 2015-2017. When Leongatha Branch closed in 2009, Joy joined Woorayl Branch where she was a member until her death.

Joy was elected Group President of Gippsland Hills Group for the period 2001-2003.

A primary school teacher until her marriage, Joy maintained an interest in the community throughout her life, being a member of the South Gippsland Shire Brass Band and the Leongatha and District Historical Society. She was elected a councillor of the Woorayl Shire Council for the period 1982-1988.

MRS HAZEL RUTTER

Hazel joined the Camperdown Evening Branch of the Country Womens Association in November 1976. She was a very active and enthusiastic member, holding the position of Secretary on a number of occasions. From 1994-1996 Hazel was Group Secretary for the Group President of the day.

She attended many Group and State functions. Her involvement was greatly appreciated.

In 2021 a DayBranch, (Clocktower) was formed to cater for members who were no longer able to attend evening meetings. Hazel again rose to the occasion and took on the role of Secretary Treasurer, although dealing with serious health issues. She held this position until her declining health forced her to relinquish the position.

Hazel was loved by all members, and will be remembered for her friendly personality.

We will miss you Hazel.



Photo by Jeff Ma on Unsplash



**The Country Women's
Association of Victoria Inc.**

care empower contribute

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