

Victorian COUNTRY WOMAN



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

care empower contribute

All women, all ages, all places

JUNE / JULY 2024 | VOLUME 72 NUMBER 3



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Association of Victoria Inc.**

care empower contribute

Join Us!



3 and 4 July 2024 JUNIOR CAMP 2024

A Two-Day Junior Camp

Theme: Let's Communicate!

Venue: "Umina", 3 Lansell Road, Toorak

Junior Camp offers CWA junior members a fabulous, fun-filled two-day programme conducted during the Winter School holidays each year.

This year we've lined up a very special two-day camp with a focus on young person's literature, writing, drama, cooking, craft and creativity. We have a packed programme including the following special highlights:

- Meet and Greet with popular Children's Author Penny Tangey
- Drama workshop with Special Guest Kelsey Gade
- Trivia Night and other games across the two-days
- Mad Hatters Themed Dinner with a prize for the Best Dressed Book Character

All junior members must be accompanied by a paying adult who remains responsible for the supervision/care of the junior at all times during the camp. This may include a parent, grandparent, carer or other responsible adult over the age of 21 years.

Please advise us of any dietary requirements or food allergies at the time of booking.

Places are strictly limited - please book early to avoid disappointment

EVENT DETAILS

Junior Camp 2024

CONTACT

For event bookings -
Reception

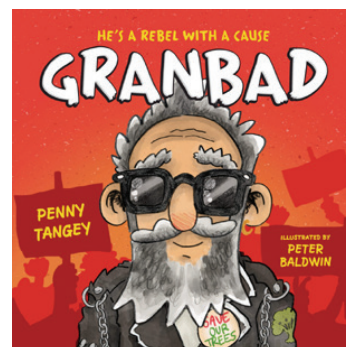
Tel: 9827 8971

Email: reception@cwaofvic.org.au

Bookings close on 28th
June 2024.

Cost: \$135 per junior member (over 8 years) and \$140 per accompanying adult includes one night's accommodation on 3rd July plus all meals and activities.

Accompanying adults must have a current Working with Children Card registered with CWA.



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



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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)

**JUNE / JULY 2024
VOLUME 72 | NUMBER 3**

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COVER PHOTO

Launch of CWA Strategic Plan
2024 - 2028

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 am writing my President's report with an element of disbelief. Disbelief at how quickly the past ten months have gone since I took up the position of State President. My goodness, how time flies when you are busy and having fun. To all of you who I have had the opportunity to meet, talk to and visit over this time, thank you for your friendship, warm welcome and especially your

support. The role is as I expected it to be, full on, filled with new learnings, varied, complex, frustrating some days, very often fun and very enjoyable.

Our greatest achievement over these last months was the launch of the Strategic Plan 2024-2028 as you will see in this edition. So much wonderful input from our members, so much enthusiasm and passion for our Association! For this I am very grateful. Without a guiding document like this we would be aimlessly floundering along without any firm direction and no ownership of where we are going. The first activities related to the plan were decided by the board and are well under way with a lot of work being done on our Advocacy Plan and focus. If you have attended State Conference 2024 you will have had the opportunity to participate in further developing our advocacy approach for the future.

We have held a number of training courses for members including Branch President, Secretary, Treasurer and Group President training. The Return of Civility session for GPs was well received, with further follow up scheduled for June State Council. We have participated in a very successful Government House event, ANZAC Day biscuits at the VRC, Pop Up Stalls both at Umina and Flemington Racecourse for their Autumn Harvest event. The magazine has had a revamp and is improving each issue with very positive feedback received by our enthusiastic committee. Our 100th Birthday sub-committee has met, and some exciting ideas are being investigated. If you have any ideas that you would like considered, please email me with the details and any contacts you might have so we can explore your suggestion. After all our members will be at the forefront of our celebrations.

I am also writing in disbelief and with very deep sadness that all the great work done by many services including our Association over the past 12 years in the field of Family Violence seems to have made little impact in our communities. The situation seems to have regressed dramatically since COVID struck. What happened? How did we lose our impetus?

The following may be a trigger to some of you and for that I apologise but I cannot ignore what is happening in our communities.

Way too many women and children have been killed at the hands of those who supposedly cared for them in the past few months. In years gone by the dreadful figure was one woman

a week killed in Australia mostly at the hands of someone who supposedly cared about them. That statistic has worsened to one every four days in recent months. Women who were loved daughters, wives, mothers, grandmothers, aunts and dearly loved friends. Women that we may have known, shopped with, lived in the same community with. Women who carried their burden silently out of fear and shame.

This situation cannot continue. We must call out this behaviour; we must support our sisters; we must raise the conversation levels about this scourge on our society; we cannot just wait for men to be sent a different message. What message do we accept in our communities and friendship circles? Family violence in small communities is even more complex than in a large city with limited resources and places to escape to.

Be assured The Country Women's Association of Victoria sees you, hears you and will continue to work towards improving conditions for women, children and families experiencing family violence through our partnerships, our fund raising, our goods in kind and by restarting our 'what can I do?' conversations across the state.

So, as I look towards the second twelve months of my term as President, please roll your sleeves up with me and continue our great work on so many fronts and come along on the journey with me!

State Diary Dates for 2024

27TH – 28TH JULY –

Open House Melbourne @ 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 OCTOBER –

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
Communications and Magazine Committee

The Communications and Magazine Committee has been overwhelmed by the wonderful feedback from members in relation to the last edition of the Victorian Country Woman magazine. Members were equally excited about the new look and format, and the fantastic articles and photos contained in the magazine. We have our fingers crossed that members will equally enjoy this edition – our final magazine as a Committee prior to State Conference.

This year the Committee has put a lot of time into increasing the reliability, content quality and presentation of the magazine. In the next 12 months we will continue to focus on producing a quality printed magazine for our members while also significantly raising the Association's profile in social media and print media with a view to increasing both internal and external communications. The popular monthly eNewsletter will also continue in 2024/2025.

At State Conference, the Communications and Magazine Committee will have a very short 3-minute survey for members to complete and to provide your feedback and ideas. We would really encourage you to take a few minutes to complete this and pop it into the survey box in the foyer at State Conference. If you can't attend State Conference, please ask one of your Branch delegates to pick you up a copy and you can scan the completed survey and send this to email: cwamagazine@cwaofvic.org.au

During the forthcoming school holidays on 3rd and 4th July 2024 at **Umina**, the Communications and Magazine Committee is excited to be joining ranks with the Creative Arts Committee in hosting this year's **Junior Camp** with a Literature theme. An exciting programme awaits our younger members!

Finally, the Board has recently approved some very modest revisions to our Committee/Branch/Group advertising rates. You will appreciate that internally we pay only a fraction of the rates of commercial advertisers in the magazine and this will continue to be the case. The new advertising rates post-16 April 2024 are as follows:

Committee/Branch/Group	Full Page	\$100
Committee/Branch/Group	Half Page	\$60
Committee/Branch/Group	Quarter Page	\$40

COMMUNITY AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT



Marilyn Tangey
Community and International Support Committee

Two years have passed by, and I am now writing my final report for this magazine. The journey has had many highlights – ACWW World Conference in Malaysia, being a member of State Council, Christmas Fare, attending Group AGMs beyond Bendigo, International Days. All these activities allowed me to meet members of a women's organisation that has the capacity to alter our society for the better.

The downside of my experience is the realisation that to improve society for those living with poverty and those in abusive relationships takes commitment and more than a passing interest. Therefore, it is essential to concentrate efforts on what can be achieved. The recent discussion in CWA around advocacy gives a way forward – identify an achievable target, form partnerships to advocate for change in government policy and implement strategies in a timely manner at a grassroots level.

In many of the reports I have written, there has been mention of the **16 days of activism against gender-based violence** campaign, which occurs Nov 25 – Dec 10 each year. It would be wonderful to see CWA members being a visible presence at gatherings that aim to highlight the issues of domestic violence. It is time to express our outrage at the violence being perpetrated by men. In April there were rallies after the deaths of five women stabbed in Bondi, and murder of three women in a week in separate incidents, and one woman killed by a man every four days in 2024. Education to change attitudes toward women and minority groups is essential. Homelessness is growing amongst women in the over-55 age group, and much of this can be attributed to their need to leave an abusive relationship, without sufficient finances to buy or even rent suitable accommodation. Violence toward women cannot be separated from homelessness.

Community Support largely occurs through donation of goods to hospitals, ambulance and fire services, organisations assisting homeless men and women, and mother and child services. Branches and Groups across the state provide aid in their own community and donate goods to be distributed from Umina. It is necessary to try to assess the volume and value of these donations and a report has been provided to State Board. During the winter months the knitted and crochet beanies, rugs, jumpers, and gloves provide material and emotional warmth for the recipients of these goods, all made with love.

Thank you for donations, received from – Bendigo, Booroondara, Broadford Mt Piper, Cowes, Horsham, Irrewarra, Nhill Twilight, Old Church on the Hill, Pearcedale, Rosebud, Tyntynder, Wodonga, and Goulburn Valley West Group.

I extend my gratitude to all CWA members for their support and especially to the committee members who attend packing days and meetings, and those who deliver goods. Thank you.

SOCIAL ISSUES



Sally Matthews
Social Issues Chairman

The leaves are turning to rusts and yellows and the nights are cooler, and as I write my final report as Chair of Social Issues it is with mixed emotions. I have absolutely enjoyed the two years chairing a wonderful committee, sharing plans and ideas with Marilyn Tangey Chair of Community & International Support Committee, and having the wisdom and support of two State Presidents. It is pleasing

that we have achieved much in all the areas that Social Issues has discussed, brought resolutions to State Conference, and involved you the members in our themes of 'Improving access to Essential Services' and 'Advocating for Change'. However, the recent tragedies in Victoria make us realise that there is much to be done in supporting those most vulnerable.

How do we advocate for change, how do we best support women and their families? Partnering with organisations that have similar goals to us, empowers us. We can have a positive impact as members are spread across the State and used wisely, we can make a difference. Organisations such as Safe Steps, Respect Victoria, Safe and Equal are well equipped with resources to assist us.

During May members attended Marches, Rallies and Vigils. 'National Domestic Violence Day' was held on 1 May and 10 May was 'Are You Safe at Home Day'?

Here are some links that may be helpful for your groups or branches to assist in understanding what we may be able to support. Perhaps you will find them helpful in understanding violence against women.

<https://safeandequal.org.au/>

[about:blank https://www.safesteps.org.au/](https://www.safesteps.org.au/)

<https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/>

I cherish winter, a time to see the bones of my garden, cook up some delicious soup and curl up with a blanket, my dog Rosie, and a great book. Winter gives us some time for us; it's a slow season and challenges us to reflect on the past year. Our energy levels have time to charge up and shorter days give us time to be inside early, perhaps you like to read, do puzzles, or watch a movie. It's the perfect time to try a new recipe or knit something special.

I think how fortunate I am to be able to do all these things and I reflect that there are many who are doing it hard this winter. Sleeping rough is not too bad in the summer months but trying to keep warm in a car or on a park bench in winter loses its gloss. There are many ways our members support those that are homeless and those that simply cannot make the budget stretch any further. Foodbanks and food share co-ops report that the pressure on them is unprecedented. Many of you

volunteer at community gardens, community pantries and prepare meals for community dinners. There are countless beanies, fingerless gloves and quilts made with love that find their way to those most vulnerable. The 'Stable One' program operates in many towns and council areas and members assist in these shelters. CWA is giving so much in our State, I am sure that those who founded our organisation 96 years ago would be immensely proud of you all.

Winter is a time for routine contentment. Let us use this time thoughtfully and may we resolve to use some of each day to make the most of the season, to give us joy and balance in our lives, and to bring some good, in our world.

AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT



Margaret Wood
Chairman Agriculture & Environment

Lentils – A Nutritional and Sustainable Powerhouse

The Agriculture and Environment Committee has been taking a detailed look at this year's product resource – pulses – and how they are beneficial to both the agricultural diversity of Victoria and to environmental sustainability.

We have explored the types of pulse crops commonly grown in Australia and their nutritional value. Over the year we hope to look at ways to encourage both the production of pulses and their use in an environmentally sustainable and nutritious family diet.

Prue McCredden, Central Wimmera Mallee Group President and a member of our Committee has done some great work providing us with information, some of which she has shared in an article in this edition of the Victorian Country Woman.



Photo by engin akyurt on Unsplash

CREATIVE ARTS



Mary Grant

Creative Arts Committee
Chairman

The cool, cool days of winter are on our doorstep. Are you ready? Have you unpacked the scarves, beanies and woolly jumpers? Have you got the knitting and crocheting needles out? Knitted babies jackets, jumpers, beanies are always sought after, particularly at the Melbourne Show.

Are you busily creating entries for the State Exhibition? I hope so as I am looking forward to seeing many entries. Group Presidents / Craft leaders – check out the entries from your Exhibitions. They don't all have to be prize winners. Be brave and enter. There is no better way to learn than to read the critique the judges provide for you. Also, offer your services to help at the Exhibition. Just let me know if you are interested at email: chaircreative@cwaofvic.org.au

Entries close on Friday 19 July for the State Creative Arts Exhibition at Moe Town Hall 9 and 10 August 2024. See you there!

Arrangements for the Sovereign Hill Harvest Festival are looking very exciting. We have a full program of craft demonstrations and food presentations organised. We are offering 4-5 sessions each day. Some give visitors the opportunity to participate while others provide taste sessions. Many thanks to Ros Deagan and her band of merry helpers from Ballarat East for all their organising and provision of samples and preserves to sell. Come and join us and enjoy the fun of yesteryear.

Want to learn a new craft? Here are some dates for the diary:

Saturday 6 July

Advanced Wet felting – learn how to felt onto a silk scarf.

Slow Stitching – learn the meditative process of simple stitching, using scraps and bits and pieces

Want to get away from it all for a bit of rest and relaxation? Join the 'Crafters Call Up'. Arrive after lunch **Tuesday 23 July**, depart after lunch Friday 26 July. Come and stay at Umina, be spoiled, learn a new craft, attend the Craft and Quilt Show.

7 and 8 September

Mending Magic – Come and learn the art of creatively mending clothes. Learn the techniques of Sashiko, Kaner and Borro embroidery.

19 October

Sourdoughs and Ferments.

Please tell people about these opportunities which are open to members and the general public.

There is still time to register your interest in training to be a Home Industries judge. Training days are scheduled for Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 June. There is an expectation that you stay

overnight as there is valuable time in the evening. Sessions start at 10.30 am on Saturday and finish approximately 2.30- 3.00 pm on Sunday. Arranging accommodation is your responsibility.

Here's a good idea: Use a shirt cuff to create a pouch for lip balm, lipstick, nail clippers etc.

- Carefully remove the cuff from the shirt.
- Take the cuff, divide into three equal parts.
- Fold up 1/3 from the non-button end. Stitch along sides to form a pouch.
- Fold over button section and secure at cuff buttonhole.
- Voila! A useful pouch.



Happy Crafting and organising those entries!

Here's a tasty slice for the cooler days.

CORN CAPSICUM AND ZUCCHINI SLICE

Serves 8 as a light meal

Prep 15 mins **Cooking** 35 mins

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tsp oil
- 1 small brown onion finely chopped
- 1 cup (150 g) SR flour
- 1 cup coarsely grated cheddar cheese
- 5 eggs lightly whisked
- ¼ cup (60ml) milk
- ¼ cup (60ml) vegetable oil
- 1 zucchini coarsely grated
- 2 corn cobs kernels removed
- 1 small yellow capsicum seeded and chopped
- 50 g sliced golden Perino tomatoes

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease and line a 19cmx 29cm slice tin with baking paper. Heat oil in frying pan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring for 5 mins until onion softens. Set aside to cool.
2. Combine flour, cheese, egg, milk, zucchini, corn, capsicum in a large bowl. Stir in the onion mixture. Season. Pour into prepared pan, smooth top.
3. Bake 30 mins or until light golden colour and cooked through.
4. Set aside to cool slightly. Turn out onto a clean chopping board, cut into slices. Serve warm or cold.

ME TIME

JUDIE GADE



Has there ever been a time that you've wanted to get away, even for just one hour, just to dull the internal noise? A period that is *only* for yourself; is that possible? A **Mind Holiday** of sorts.

This is what is termed SELF-CARE and it is essential for overall wellbeing. Over the coming magazines, we will explore *Self Care, the basis of Me Time*, including the physical, emotional, social and spiritual ways we can care for ourselves.

THE RULES

Turn off all technology. Before you have a meltdown, you are not biologically attached to your mobile or your tablet. If you haven't realised it by now, they are a distraction and at times a waste of your grey matter.

Determine how much time you can dedicate to you. It can be one hour a day or maybe 4 hours a week is more your style? Record a message on your phone stating you are unavailable and to leave a message, then turn your phone on silent or off. Tell your loved ones this is not negotiable. This is time for You.

Twenty-five years ago, this was not an issue. Now everywhere you look, people of all ages have their faces planted looking at their mobiles.

PHYSICAL SELF CARE

TAKE TAI CHI CLASS. This gentle form of martial art is particularly well-suited for those seeking low-impact exercise that promotes balance, flexibility, and inner calm. Tai Chi's slow and deliberate movements encourage a focus on the present, which can help to still the mind and reduce stress. Its meditative quality can lower blood pressure and improve mental clarity, making it a powerful tool for stress management.

GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY. Tending to plants and immersing oneself in the natural world can be incredibly therapeutic. The act of nurturing something alive can provide a sense of purpose and connection. Additionally, exposure to sunlight and the soil microbiome can have mood-lifting effects, thanks to the natural production of vitamin D and the potential antidepressant properties of certain soil bacteria.

Did you know if you spend a lot of time indoors, you could be suffering from a **Green Deficit**? Some studies, over the years, have shown an increase in concentration and focus by up to 30% just by being amongst the trees. So, if you need to concentrate, sit under a tree and do your work. One hour in the vegetable plot does it for me.

WRITE IN A JOURNAL. Keeping a journal allows you to process your thoughts and feelings in a constructive and creative way. It can be a private, silent space to express worries, dreams, goals and reflections. It can help manage anxiety, reduce feelings of stress and improves your mood. The process of writing can also enhance cognitive function by keeping the brain engaged and improving memory. I'm *all* for that.

DRAWING OR PAINTING. Expressing yourself artistically, is a powerful form of non-verbal communication, that can help to process complex emotions. The act of focusing on the creation of visual art can also induce a state of flow, where the artist becomes fully immersed in the activity, pushing aside worries and stress. This can be particularly empowering, as it allows you to create something uniquely yours, boosting self-esteem and providing a sense of accomplishment.



Photo by Elena Mozhvilo on Unsplash

SOAK IN A WARM BATH. Submerging in warm water, bubbles can help relax tense muscles, whilst promoting a feeling of weightlessness that can be deeply relaxing. The addition of Epsom salts and/or essential oils can provide therapeutic benefits through aromatherapy and magnesium absorption. This self-care ritual can become a sanctuary for quiet reflection and rejuvenation. Essential oils could include pink grapefruit, lavender, geranium and lemongrass.

BREATHWORK. Controlled breathing techniques can help to counteract the stress response. For women facing daily stressors, breathwork can be an immediately accessible tool to regain a sense of control and induce relaxation. Regular practice can improve respiratory efficiency and increase oxygen flow to the brain, which can enhance focus and mental clarity.

This is particularly important as we've seen the after-effects of COVID-19. My breathing has been a real issue the last two years, after Long Covid, Developing into POTS [Postural Orthostatic Tachycardic Syndrome]. My lungs have developed scarring, due to the coughing fits I have experienced. The tiredness I can only describe as feeling like I was fading.

The Brahma Kumaris, who practise a form of yoga, where they meditate and concentrate on the breath and silence. One minute each hour. I can afford that time. Stand very still, no talking, and stare at spot on the wall for a minute. It brings you back to the present and grounds you.

GRAB A GOOD BOOK TO GET LOST IN. Diving into a good book can be a form of escape from the stressors that can bombard you daily. Reading can transport the reader to another world, provide new perspectives and stimulate the imagination. It doesn't require leaving the comfort of your home or taking out another mortgage to buy a ticket from Qantas. It's a solitary activity that can offer solace and a break from life's responsibilities.

CUT THE CAFFEINE. It's only for a short time ... of course you will try to make an excuse that it calms you. Nice try. Why not try a real Chai Tea? Not the teabag variety, buy some loose leaf. Half chai, half black tea. I add rose petals, aniseed myrtle, kibbled ginger, cinnamon, and cardamom. Incorporating these activities into a regular self-care routine can help women maintain not only their physical health, but also promote emotional and psychological resilience. The natural, chemical-free nature of these practices makes them accessible and sustainable options for nurturing calm and stillness in a busy world.

Now it's MY turn. A cup of Chai, a good book and long soak in the bath sounds like bliss! If only I could get in the tub without dislocating my right hip. I can dream.

Photo by Micheile Henderson on Unsplash



Photo by Basil Lade on Unsplash

INTERNATIONAL LUNCHEON AT UMINA

45 lucky CWA Members recently attended the annual International Luncheon, organised by the Community and International Support Committee to learn about this year's country of study, Romania.

The guest speaker was the Romanian Consul for Melbourne, Claudia Bejenaru. Claudia spoke to us about Romania's history, issues for women, and links between Australia and Romania.

We learned that:

- Romania is a democratic Latin country surrounded by Slavic countries. It is an area that was a part of the Roman Empire in ancient times and the Romanian language has its roots in Latin, just like French and Spanish, but is most similar to modern Portuguese.
- It is a nation which was formed in 1918. It covers an area of 240,000 sq. kms with a population of 19 million. Six million Romanians live outside the country, many in other European nations. There are 100,000 Romanians in Australia. The biggest Romanian community is in Melbourne.
- Australia and Romania shared a base in the Antarctic and troops from both countries have served together in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Claudia pointed out that we both love sports (Romania does especially well in gymnastics) and BBQs!
- The main export from Romania to Australia is tractor parts.
- Romania is a member of NATO and the European Union. The Euro was going to be introduced but the covid pandemic halted this process.
- Childcare and education (including university) are free, a legacy of Romania's communist past. Maternity leave is for 2 years at full pay.
- Traditional crafts include embroidery and knitting. All young girls are taught these crafts by their grandmothers. Decorating Easter eggs is a delicate art form. There are a number of world-renowned Romanian sculptors, including Constantin Brâncusi.
- Claudia spoke about places of interest and made us all want to visit. She told us about diverse tourist spots including the Black Sea, the Danube Delta with its wildlife, and castles in Transylvania.



Lyn Harris, Deb Icely



Jenny Nola, Elwyn Robinson, Claudia Bejenaru, Lyn Harris, Dida Hobbs

The dining room was decorated in blue, yellow and red tablecloths and napkins, reflecting the colours of the Romanian flag. Claudia complimented the delicious food cooked by Club Chair, Karen Jackson and her team, as being very authentic, as did Romanian CWA Sunbury Member, Dida Hobbs. The cuisine is another reason to visit Romania!

Romania shares a border with Ukraine and it is estimated that there are over 100,000 Ukrainian refugees currently in Romania. Many refugees have also passed through Romania on their way to other European nations where they might have families and a shared language.

ACWW has a project called **Planting the Seeds of Peace**. This is a 12-month programme designed to develop and implement a practical training course for Ukrainian refugee children in the Romanian capital city Bucharest, centred around the ecological growing of plants and vegetables.

From the ACWW website: "The aim of the project is to help children recover from the stress and trauma of war through the therapeutic practice of gardening. The participants will attend monthly classes during the school year to gain knowledge of horticulture. Alongside this the participants will attend practical gardening sessions.

FOOD SAFETY UPDATE



Above Left: Dining room. **Top Right:** Entree- pork and bean soup, served in sourdough roll **Above Right:** Main course- stuffed capsicum, cabbage roll, polenta.



Jennie Hammon, Thelma Morris, Helen Sands



Marilyn Tangey, Claudia Bejenaru

The project was conceived to help children impacted by the conflict in Ukraine to recover through a practical and conscious approach to agriculture and horticulture. The children will learn about growing plants, soil restoration and climate change. The practice of gardening has been proven to be a very therapeutic tool for those who have suffered trauma. It has been found to reduce stress, anxiety and depression and to improve psychological wellbeing."

Deb Icely



Peg Higginbottom
State Vice-President

New food safety standards came into effect from 8 December 2023. Members need to familiarise themselves with them and undertake training to update their Food Handling certifications.

Thank you to all the Group Presidents and branches who responded to my request for information regarding those who have completed food handling/supervisor training and the date of their certification. Based on the data received, approximately 18- 20% of members have undertaken a course/s. As an aside, it is important to note that the training undertaken for The Melbourne Royal Show is specific and only valid for that event.

The information below comes from The Department of Health web site and outlines the requirements regarding food safety.

One-off fund-raising activities solely for a community not-for-profit or charitable cause, such as a sausage sizzle, market stall or fete, are exempt from the standard. However, the Country Women Association of Victoria Inc. must ensure that members handling food know how to do so safely.

We are obligated to ensure that the food we prepare and sell is properly and safely prepared for consumption. So it is good practice for our organisation to ensure that you all understand the responsibilities required for handling food safely and hygienically.

We would like as many members as possible to complete the Victorian Department of Health free food handling course **Do Food Safely**. It is designed for food handlers to be used as a learning tool. The online course takes about an hour to complete and a certificate of completion is issued to those who achieve a score of at least 90%.

The topics covered are:

Why Food Safety

Personal Hygiene

Food Handling

Food Contamination

Food Delivery Storage & Display

Cleaning & Sanitising

Food Allergens.

The web site is <https://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au>

Once you have completed your training please be sure to advise your Branch Secretary who will advise Robyn Smith in Administration, so we have a list of all members with basic food handling training.

If you need further information or advice, you can contact me at peghigginbottom@yahoo.com.au

SLOW COOKING

Ever wonder where and how we got the slow cooker? There are many ethnic groups over millennia for whom slow cooking techniques and traditions are a mainstay of community and family life.

Earthen oven cooking allows radiant heat and moisture to slow cook whatever ingredients are placed there for example:

Australia – murnong roots in mirnyong ground ovens warmed by heated clay

Hawai'i – a whole pig in banana leaves in imu earth ovens with sizzling rocks

Peru – tubers, corn, and alpaca steaks in a pachamanca

Lithuania – in the 1800s in the town of Vilnius families would, before nightfall on a Friday, place meat, beans, and vegetables in a crock and take it to the town's bakeries to have them placed in the still-hot ovens which would slowly cool overnight and with the residual heat result in a stew.

Chile – meat, fish, and vegetables in curanto ovens

New Zealand - they use a "hangi".

Inventors are curious problem solvers so for Irving Nachumsohn (USA), an electrical engineer, the answer to the issue of how to cook in the summer heat without turning on the oven was – you got it- the slow-cooker. He patented this on May 21st in 1936, and it was granted on January 23rd 1940. The Crock-Pot as we currently know it came about from a re-branding in the 1970s when Irving retired and sold his Naxon Beanery company and it's slow-cooker to Rival.

Bon appetit, with however you cook your winter warmers.

Resources

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/brief-history-crock-pot-180973643/>

<https://tastecooking.com/the-underground-story-of-slow-cooking/>

Jenny Tuck
Deputy Editor

SLOW COOKED OSSO BUCO

Peg Higginbottom

SLOW COOKED CREAMY PUMPKIN SOUP

Judie Gade

BOEUF BOURGUIGNON

Amanda Millar

SLOW COOKED OSSO BUCO



This is a versatile and delicious winter recipe.

It can be served, as is, with mashed potato and vegetables of your choice. Or serve it with saffron or preserved lemon risotto, which takes this dish to another level.

Make more than you require and use the leftovers as a ragout to mix with pasta.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 veal shin slices – tied around the side and lightly floured
- ½ cup seasoned plain flour
- 90 gm of butter
- 60 ml of olive oil
- 60 ml of tomato paste
- 125 ml of chicken or beef stock
- 500 ml of dry white wine
- 2 zucchinis sliced
- 2 carrots diced
- 1 red onion sliced
- 1 celery stalk sliced
- Tsp. dried thyme
- Salt & pepper

GREMOLATA INGREDIENTS

- 2 minced garlic cloves
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- Grated zest of 2 lemons

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 160°C.
2. Melt butter and add oil in a cast-iron casserole
3. Sauté veal until brown on both sides
4. Add stock and paste and cook for 3 minutes
5. Add wine and let bubble and partially evaporate
6. Add vegetables and cover with baking paper
7. Cover casserole.
8. Place in oven and simmer for 45 minutes
9. Check that veal is still covered by stock and add more fluid if needed
10. Place back in oven for another 45 minutes.
11. Remove veal and with a stick blender, blend the sauce then replace meat and return to the oven for 15-30 minutes until meat is tender and the sauce has reduced and thickened.
12. Remove string from meat and serve with sauce on the plate and veal placed on top and with vegetables or risotto.
13. Place mixed gremolata ingredients on veal and serve.

SLOW-COOKED CREAMY PUMPKIN SOUP

Nothing says 'Winter is nearly here' as clearly as the days getting shorter and cooler, the foliage on the Japanese maples turning shades of amber, burnt orange and red. Then, there's pumpkins. Many, many Jap/Kent pumpkins.

I bought some lucerne mulch from a local farmer. In three beds pumpkin seedlings sprung up; I'm not talking about a few. I've never had much success with pumpkin seeds but I have dreamt of having them grow along the side access road of our neighbouring property.

I didn't know what I was getting myself in for. Eighteen so far and another twenty on the vine. Luckily, I like pumpkins. This slow-cooked version of pumpkin soup is quite flexible. It can also be made the usual way.

At a push, if making it for dinner that night, you can put all the ingredients straight into the slow cooker, on low, except the dairy, salt and stock powder, adding those when you have pureed the soup when you get home.



NOTES

This soup freezes well. I usually make a big batch and divide it up.

You can add a potato, sweet potato, carrots into the vegetable mix. if you get a bit heavy-handed with the salt, add a whole potato and leave 30 minutes. You can either take it out later or include in the mix.

This soup is also good for elderly people whose appetite isn't what it was. It's also good for people with Parkinson's Disease & Dementia. Using a soup cup is easier to handle when their dexterity is disappearing. It's nutritious, nutrient dense & and easy to digest.

Just trust your instincts and experiment. Enjoy.

INGREDIENTS

- 2-2.5 kg of peeled Jap pumpkin, cubed in a 3cm dice
- 1 to 2 tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of butter, unsalted
- 150-200g brown onion, diced
- 4 large cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 10-15g fresh ginger, grated
- 1 litre-1.5 litres of chicken stock homemade preferably, hot
- 3 tsp Vegeta chicken stock powder
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 250ml of thickened cream
- 125 g of cream cheese, 2cm dice

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Turn on slow cooker/crockpot on high
2. On the stove, heat oil and butter, onion, garlic and ginger. Pan fry until the onion is translucent
3. Put into the slow cooker which has preheated on high
4. Add the pumpkin in batches, stirring the onion mix through. The ingredients should fill the pot within 4cm
5. Add the hot chicken stock to barely below the vegetables
6. Cook on high for 6 hours or on low for 8-10 hours
7. Add stock powder and salt to taste
8. Using an immersion blender, purée. Take the pot off the heat
9. Add cream then add cream cheese
10. Put back on heat and use the immersion blender again until smooth
11. Put into bowls and serve with crusty bread. Add a swirl of cream and panfried bacon bits.

BOEUF BOURGUIGNON (SERVES 6 PEOPLE)

With acknowledgment to Diana Holuigue's fabulous cookery book, *The French Kitchen*, published in 1983 from whence this recipe comes (with a few of my own tweaks). My first ever cooking course was when my sister Jane and I did a cookery course with renowned Food Writer Diana Holuigue in her Armadale-based Cookery School, The French Kitchen, over thirty years ago. To this day, this book remains my food "bible" (sorry CWA).

With the Olympics being held in Paris from 26 July to 11 August, I thought we needed an absolute French classic to warm our winter nights as we cheer on our Australian team competing in one of the world's most stunning cities. Enjoy with a glass of something special – Australian or French as you prefer!



INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 kg of braising beef (preferably gravy beef or oyster blade)
- 60 g butter
- 250 g bacon
- 1 tablespoon plain flour
- 450 ml red wine (I use a peppery Shiraz but traditionally the wine would be a lighter red wine)
- 300 ml beef stock
- 4 shallots (if available – otherwise substitute more onion)
- 1 onion chopped (or 12 tiny pickling onions)
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 1 beef cube
- 2 teaspoons tomato paste
- Bouquet garni
- Salt and Pepper
- 30 g butter
- 150 g button champignons (you can use canned champignons)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut the beef into 3 cm cubes and the bacon into bite sized pieces.
2. In a large, thick bottomed flameproof casserole dish (or your slow cooker), heat the 60 g of butter until very hot and fry the bacon until crispy. Remove to a plate.
3. Brown the beef until as brown as possible without burning. Remember that well browned meat is essential for the flavour of the sauce.
4. Scatter 1 heaped tablespoon of plain flour across the meat. With a wooden spoon, toss the meat until the flour has coloured lightly and stuck to the bottom of the pan. Any flour that remains white will form lumps in the sauce.
5. Add the red wine, stock, and all those ingredients that add flavour – the finely chopped shallots and garlic, bouquet garni, the beef cube, the tomato paste, and salt and pepper.
6. See that the liquid comes to the boil and then reduce the heat to a gentle simmer until the meat is tender (approximately 2 ¼- 2 ½ hours). In my slow cooker, I will often leave this simmering all day – so that the meat is very tender by the evening.
7. 45 minutes before the end of cooking: sauté the onions in 30 g butter and then add with the bacon pieces to the casserole dish (or slow cooker).
8. 10 minutes before the end of cooking: wash the champignons well and trim the tails. Toss for 30 seconds in 30 g butter which will give them some colour.
9. When cooking has finished – discard the bouquet garni and check the seasoning.
10. Serve with preferred vegetables or Riz Pilaf as preferred.

LAUNCH OF THE COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC. STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 – 2028

The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028 was officially launched by State President Jennifer Nola and Mr Anthony Schinck, Executive Director Regions of the Victorian Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, in an event held at *Umina* on 16 April 2024.

Commenced under then State President Pam Mawson OAM, the Strategic Plan was the culmination of work over many months by more than 1,000 of our members who contributed their thoughts and ideas with facilitation by Cath Smith of ChangeSmith.

The Association acknowledges the financial support of the Victorian State Government via the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions which enabled us to realise this project.

Our Strategic Plan sets goals and priorities for the Association across four keys areas:

- Positive Social Impact
- A Visible Presence in Victoria
- Enhanced Member Experience
- Well Governed and Financially Sustainable

The Board has already set its work objectives for 2024 based on achieving the goals set as part of our new Strategic Plan.

The Association is very proud of our Strategic Plan which will underpin the activities of our renowned organisation as we approach our 100th anniversary in Victoria in 2028.

Amanda Millar
Editor



IN THE SPOTLIGHT WITH STATE TREASURER MARIE VASSALLO

INTERVIEW BY AMANDA MILLAR (EDITOR)

Marie – tell us about your childhood. What were the special things that made you into the person you are today?

I was born at the Springvale Bush Hospital when it was a Bush Hospital. It's now the Woolworths carpark and, although my dad has now passed away, my mother still lives right near there.

I am the product of two parents who were complete opposites – from very different cultures- and we spent a lot of time discussing things which is why I think I'm a good talker. In our house, there was no one right way to do things. Dad was Catholic, a Liberal voter and barracked for Essendon. My mum is a Protestant, staunch Labor and barracked for Fitzroy. Dad had come from Malta in 1956 and he was the 16th child of 18 in his family. My dad had two brothers and a sister here in Australia already which is why we spent every Sunday afternoon going on visits to my uncles and aunties' houses and all our cousins did the same. This was after going to lots of football – first the Aussie Rules on Saturday and also supporting St George Cross on Sundays– the Maltese Soccer Club.

I adored my father, and I was very much Daddy's girl. My father truly believed and used to repeatedly tell me that there was nothing that I couldn't do in life, so I grew up believing this. It was a big shock to me when I was told at 16 years old that, as a girl, I couldn't go out to a birthday in St Kilda at night. This was the very first time that it even occurred to me there was a barrier.

My mother was born in Bendigo and is a 6th or 7th generation Aussie – so mum and dad really were chalk and cheese. I'll never forget on 11th November 1975 when my mother arrived at the school all dressed in black and came to take my brother and me home because of the (in her view) calamitous events of the dismissal of Gough Whitlam – 'democracy was dead'. My father on the other hand came home from work that day whistling – because he was so glad to see the end of Gough! In our household everyone was respectful of each other's views but we always had a say.

I was the first person in my family to go to University to study Nursing and this was a very big deal. I attended MacRobertson Girls' High School – a select entry school – and I really loved it. I found my tribe there.



Marie at Kindergarten

What's one thing about you that our readers probably don't know?

I'm allergic to cats. I really dislike cats and I don't trust them. I'm very much a dog person – unlike my partner, Myles, who likes cats and hates dogs.

What led you to join the Country Women's Association?

I didn't even know that it existed. I was at the Slow Food Festival at the Collingwood Children's Farm around 2007. I wandered over to the Food Arc and I met what I have lovingly described as two old ducks including Noela MacLeod AO. I got chatting. A couple of months later I had a call from Kay Kyle (former State Treasurer and MOH) who was at that time the Membership Convenor and apparently, I had put down my details as a potential member. I was asked to come along and form a branch that is now known as Umina Branch. I think this was the first metro night branch – though they already had night branches in the country. I attended my first meeting and walked out the door as Branch Secretary!



Favourite Cooking Class at Bendigo TAFE with MOH Carol Clay and Marilyn Mackie

Professionally you have your own business. Tell us about that and what got you started down that path.

I actually have two businesses. Rie's Kitchen is my hobby business, and this started when someone (and I still to this day don't know who it was) left me 20 kilograms of apples so I decided to make Worcestershire sauce. I had to buy all the bottles and other equipment – so that was how Rie's Kitchen came into being and I now have a cook book, lots of YouTube videos and I teach all over the State.

My other business is my consulting business in Vocational Education which I've now been doing for over 20 years.

Professionally I am a trained nurse having studied at LaTrobe University and having worked in the Road Trauma Department at the Alfred. Because I am legally blind in my right eye I couldn't continue with the bedside work of being a nurse. I've taught nursing at Deakin and LaTrobe Universities and Phillip Institute

A lot of the work I do is in compliance, and I like writing policy and helping businesses to improve and to maintain viability. I like to help people and to give back which is very similar to the CWA!

What about life outside of the CWA?

Outside of the CWA I like growing vegetables. I'm not interested in growing flowers – I like something you can use. My partner, Myles, and I both love to travel. When I travel, I take cooking classes. In June, we're heading to Japan and, in November, hopefully to Spain. I collect kitchen equipment and old cookery books. I'm learning French via Duolingo and I have done over 300 days straight. I do a lesson each evening.

Myles is a very active, outdoor person – so I join him in these activities because he supports me in the things I like to do. I've included a photo from a 3 day kayaking trip in New Zealand.

Give us one thing you've learned from being a CWA member. How has it changed your life?

I've learnt to slow down. I run at 100 miles per hour usually, but the words 'Grow calm, serene, gentle' have had an influence on me and make me stop for a minute. It's OK to stop and have a moment for yourself.

What's your absolute favourite place in the world and why?

Easy. Valetta Harbour, Malta – especially when there are no cruise ships in town. It's just stunning. Built by the Knights of St John in the 1550's, there's such a sense of history there. When I'm there and Myles is eating a pastizzi (even though I can't because I'm coeliac) I'm home.

Tell us about the role of being State Treasurer which you have now held twice?

I'm onsite at *Umina* eight hours per week, and I probably do a further 10 – 15 hours per week outside of this and that's not counting all the State events (24 Pop-Ups per year, The Show, The Christmas Fare, Exhibition etc). Only at State Events do I actually handle money – it's really a strategic planning and policy role.

If I can give one piece of advice – just ask. People can get themselves into such a mess, but please just ask. There's always help available. Your first port of call is your Group President. But after that please feel you can contact me – email is preferred (statetreasurer@cwaofvic.org.au) as I'm sometimes working or tied up in meetings. But I will always get back to you as soon as I can.

I'd also be happy for someone who might be thinking of taking the role on in future to come and shadow me – either at the Show or in the office.

What advice would you give to someone thinking about joining the CWA?

The CWA is a very broad church and there are people in the Association who are into just about everything in life. You will find your tribe – just try it. You will find your place. You can embrace your inner dag, do artwork, cook, help others, do fundraising, do advocacy.



Marie – Photo by Brock



Marie kayaking on the Whanganui River in New Zealand



Marie and Myles – Valetta Harbour, Malta

PUZZLE

WORD SEARCH

THE OLD DAYS

BATH
BOX CAMERA
BRIQUETTES
CASSETTE
COPPER
CWA
DAD
DOG
DRIPPING
DUNNY
FILM
FORD
FUR STOLE
GALLON
HATS
HERALD
HILLS HOIST
HOLDEN
ICE CHEST
JUKEBOX
KENNEL
KEROSENE
KETTLE

LONG NECK
MILKMAN
MUM
NANNA
OPEN FIRE
OUNCES
PENNY
PEN PAL
PINT
POKER
POP
PROJECTOR
PUSHBIKE
PUSH MOWER
SHILLINGS
TELEGRAM
TOBACCO
TROUGH
TWIN TUB
TWO UP
TYPEWRITER
WOODPILE
WOOD STOVE

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

ANSWERS ODE TO A SAUSAGE

M H O B A R T O D E N O R P A G A B
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 I 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
S E T Y L O C A C O Z I R O H C B A



Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.
West Gippsland Group

2024 Creative Arts Exhibition

Cranbourne Public Hall,
Cnr. Clarendon & High Streets,
Cranbourne
18 October 10.00am - 4.00pm
19 October 10.00am - 3.30pm

Admission: Adults \$5.
Children accompanying an adult free.

Stalls • Raffle • Demonstrations
• Refreshments available

Enquiries: Ann Laws 0408 381 224
Find us on facebook:
CWA West Gippsland Group

PULSES

2024 Product of Study

Pulses are a leguminous crop harvested solely for the dry seed. Dried beans, chickpeas, lentils, and peas are the most commonly known and consumed types of pulses.

These little nutrition nuggets play a huge role in healthy diets in countries all over the world. They are an excellent source of protein, fibre, and a range of essential nutrients such as iron, zinc, and folate.

The **six** major pulse groups grown in Australia are **chickpea, faba/broad bean, field pea, lentil, lupin and mung bean**. In addition, there are a number of smaller and/or niche market crops such as azuki bean, navy bean, cowpea, vetch and pigeon pea.

Australia exports a substantial volume of pulses each year. We are favoured over competitors because of consistent, high quality commodity production. The majority of exported product is used for human consumption.

Australia produces an average of 2.2 million metric tonnes of pulses from more than 1.8 million hectares annually. Western Australia, New South Wales and South Australia regularly produce the largest quantity of pulses in Australia. Pulses are typically planted during May and grown through the winter months of June, July, and August in the northern, southern and western grain production regions of Australia. Harvest takes place during late spring and early summer from September through to January.

Pulses and pulse foods are universally recommended as part of a **healthy diet** and feature prominently in some of the world's healthiest diets and longest-lived food cultures, such as Mediterranean diets.

Pulses have huge potential to improve the diets of people and promote the health of populations globally.

Pulses are rich sources of proteins. Proteins, also known as body building nutrients, help in the growth and maintenance of our body. They are nutrients which are required by the body in large quantities.

Pulses are a sustainable food choice due to their low carbon footprint, water efficiency, biodiversity and soil health benefits, and economic benefits. Incorporating pulses into our diets can help to reduce the environmental impact of our food choices while providing essential nutrients for our health. By choosing sustainable foods like pulses, we can contribute to a more sustainable food system and a healthier planet.

Pulses are beneficial for biodiversity and soil health. They can fix nitrogen in the soil, which increases soil fertility and reduces the need for synthetic fertilisers. Additionally, pulses can be grown in rotation with other crops, which can help to reduce soil erosion and promote soil health.

Pulses are also a sustainable food choice because they are water efficient. Water scarcity is a growing global concern, and agriculture is a major contributor to water usage. Compared to other crops, pulses require less water to grow.

Pulses are great to cook with as well. They are suitable for both savory and sweet dishes.

Over the year I hope to educate you on the benefits of this versatile product and I look forward to you sharing your favourite recipe.

Prue McCredden

Central Wimmera Mallee Group
Agricultural and Environment Committee

MEDITERRANEAN CHICKPEA SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 400g can chickpeas, rinsed, drained
- 200g grape tomatoes, halved
- 100g feta, crumbled
- 40g (1/4 cup) pitted Sicilian olives, quartered
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- 1 red capsicum, deseeded, coarsely chopped
- 1 Lebanese cucumber, quartered lengthways, sliced
- ½ cup chopped fresh continental parsley leaves
- ½ cup chopped fresh basil leaves

DRESSING

- 1 garlic clove
- 80ml (1/3 cup) extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard

INSTRUCTIONS

To make the dressing, place the garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar and mustard in a screw-top jar. Shake to combine. Set aside for 10 minutes to allow the flavours to develop.

Combine the chickpeas, tomato, feta, olive, onion, capsicum, cucumber, parsley and basil in a large bowl. Remove the garlic clove from the dressing. Add the dressing to the salad. Season. Toss to combine. Serve

The dressing can be made up to 4 hours ahead.

You can also make the salad up to 4 hours ahead, just leave out the tomato, herbs and dressing. Store in the fridge. Remove 20 minutes before serving. Add the dressing and remaining ingredients just before serving.

LENTILS – A NUTRITIONAL AND SUSTAINABLE POWERHOUSE

Lentils, a type of legume, stand out as a nutritional powerhouse. An affordable source of protein and packed full of fibre, they host a range of health benefits as well as being a sustainable option. Easy to prepare and versatile they can act as a great base for any meal. Regular consumption of legumes, including lentils, has been associated with a decreased risk of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and certain cancers.

GOOD FOR YOU

There are several reasons we should be eating lentils for good health.

- A source of plant protein which is important for maintaining strength.
- High in dietary fibre to support digestive health and more specifically the soluble fibre that can also have a cholesterol lowering effect by mopping up extra cholesterol and facilitating its removal.
- Lentils are complex carbohydrates requiring slow digestion which provides gradual and sustained energy, helping to stabilise blood sugar levels and promote a lasting feeling of fullness.
- The fermentation of fibre and resistant starch by gut bacteria promotes gut health and produces beneficial compounds such as short-chain fatty acids, which play a role in mood regulation.
- They are rich in vitamins and minerals. Lentils contain folate for energy production, thiamin for a healthy nervous system and Vitamin B6 for brain health, as well as minerals such as iron, magnesium, potassium and zinc for strong bones and a healthy immune system. Bioactive compounds like phytosterols further contribute to disease protection.

GOOD FOR THE PLANET

As legumes are nitrogen fixers, they play an important role in our food production and can be included as part of a sustainable crop rotation. By drawing nitrogen from the atmosphere, they reduce the need for additional fertilisers and contribute to improved soil health and biodiversity. Legumes can be stored for a long period of time without affecting their quality or nutritional value which plays an important role in our food security. The carbon footprint is just one tenth that of meat when compared per gram of protein and will likely play an important role in feeding our growing population, especially as they are water efficient.

HOW TO USE

Lentils are available in various types, either dried or canned. To prepare dried lentils, bring them to a boil in plenty of water and simmer for 30-45 minutes until tender – they don't need to be soaked overnight like other legumes. Canned lentils can be drained and rinsed before use.

Try these great ideas to get more lentils onto your plate!

- Boost your spaghetti bolognaise
- Serve a savvy green lentil salad
- Pop some into your pumpkin soup before blending
- Try your hand at a delicious dal curry
- Indulge your sweet tooth with a lentil brownie (no one will even know).

CONSIDERATIONS

Despite their numerous benefits, it's important to note that lentils contain galacto-oligosaccharides (GOS), a particular type of fibre. This can result in gas, bloating or a pain in the belly for some. The gas is caused because the GOS isn't broken down properly and travels along the digestive tracts where it is fermented by bacteria in our large intestine. This an important part of maintaining good gut health but can result in some undesirable effects. Try to increase the amount of lentils and other legumes in your diet gradually over time and be sure to drink plenty of water to help aid digestion. Soaking, rinsing, and discarding the water used to cook the lentils will all help to reduce these gas causing compounds.

How will you add more lentils into your diet?

Emily Turnbull, Dietitian

CHOCOLATE HUMMUS

INGREDIENTS

- 400g can chickpeas (1 ½ cups cooked)
- ¼ cup tahini*
- ¼ cup maple syrup or agave syrup, plus more to taste
- ½ cup cocoa powder (Dutch process / dark chocolate cocoa powder, if desired)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Drain the chickpeas into a glass measuring cup and reserve the can liquid (aquafaba).
2. To the bowl of a food processor, add the chickpeas, tahini, maple or agave syrup, cocoa powder, vanilla, kosher salt, and 2 tablespoons aquafaba. Puree for 30 seconds, then scrape down the bowl. Taste; if necessary, add a bit more syrup to sweeten the taste even further. Add additional 1 to 2 tablespoons aquafaba and puree again to come to a creamy consistency. Store refrigerated for 7 to 10 days.
3. Serve with pretzels, pineapple, green apple slices, and strawberries.

VEGETARIAN BOLOGNESE WITH FETTUCCINE

delicious.com.au

INGREDIENTS

- 10g dried porcini mushrooms
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, roughly chopped
- 1 small red capsicum, chopped
- 2 tbs olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 red chilli, finely chopped
- 2 tsp chopped oregano leaves
- 400g can brown lentils, drained, rinsed
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 400g dried fettuccine
- Flat-leaf parsley, to serve
- Shaved parmesan, to serve

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the porcini mushrooms in a small heatproof bowl and pour over 1/2 cup (125ml) boiling water. Set aside to soak for 10 minutes. Drain, reserving soaking liquid, and finely chop.
2. Pulse the onion, carrot and capsicum in a food processor until finely chopped.
3. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the chopped vegetables and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until soft. Add garlic, chilli, oregano and porcini. Cook, stirring occasionally, for a further 2-3 minutes.
4. Add the lentils, tomatoes and porcini liquid, bring to the boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until thick. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.
5. Meanwhile, cook pasta in a large saucepan of lightly salted boiling water according to packet instructions. Drain well and return to pan with sauce; toss to combine. Serve garnished with parmesan and flat-leaf parsley.



Photo by Frédéric Dupont on Unsplash

BOOK REVIEW



“Hope” By Rosie Batty with Sue Smethurst

This newly-released memoir from Rosie Batty focuses on her life after becoming Australian of the Year in 2015 and how a person can survive the most terrible of circumstances and begin to rebuild their life while inspiring others that hope is not defeated.

Rosie’s 11-year-old son, Luke, was tragically killed by his father after cricket practice on a summer’s evening in 2014. It is an event which few of us will ever forget.

Co-authored by award-winning journalist and author Sue Smethurst – who gave an inspirational address as a Guest Panellist at our CWA International Women’s Day Celebration – this new memoir has received widespread applause and is already a best-seller in bookstores around Australia.

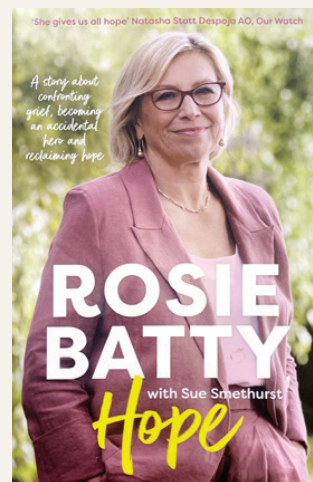
Sadly, the book has been released at a time when domestic violence and violence against women has reached horrifying levels in 2024, and when it seems that the efforts of so many who have campaigned tirelessly against this violence – including Rosie Batty – appear to have failed to stop these tragic events.

But what “Hope” teaches us is that one person really can make a difference, and that speaking out – even in the toughest of imaginable circumstances – shines a light to encourage others to seek the help they need to escape their own circumstances.

A stunningly written account of the life of a remarkable woman bringing hope to all women.

Publisher: Harper Collins Publishers/RRP \$35.99

Amanda Millar
Editor



As we approach the centenary of our Association, many members will become curious about various aspects of our history.

The article below, thanks to Yvonne Tindle, the Branch Historian from Drouin, gives us an account of some of the key points in the history of *Umina*. Congratulations Yvonne on a fascinating article and congratulations to Drouin Branch for maintaining such a comprehensive archive.

FROM DROUIN ARCHIVES - UMINA

Drouin Branch is very fortunate that those who have gone before us have conserved lots of information and artefacts pertaining to our 85 year history. One such is an 'Urgent Circular' sent to our Secretary, Mrs Sweetman by the CWA Victoria State President Mrs Irene Walsh on 18 October, 1948.

Typed on quarto sized CWA of Victoria letterhead (from the then headquarters at 54 Market Street, Melbourne, C.1), on a manual typewriter with a cloth ribbon, the text reads –

"Members I have something very exciting to tell you and something to ask you. After many years of searching we have bought a lovely home in Toorak to be used for a Club for members. (Details as to tariff, etc., will be published in the November 'Country Crafts').

"Will you all do everything you can to pay off the purchase price before the next Annual Meeting? There are 24,000 members now, so with the price of the building and grounds (£20,000)

plus the furnishings we will need approximately £1 a member. This does not mean each member must give the money herself but it gives the branches a target to try and send at that rate.

"The house will accommodate about 30 members, is situated at No. 3 Lansell Road, Toorak, and it is a spacious home, which, set in its lovely lawns and beautiful trees, will prove an ideal place for members from all over the State to stay while in the city.

"We have borrowed the money to pay for the purchase so the quicker you can all send in your donations the lower will be our interest bill.

"I am sure you will all do your best and I hope by the December executive to be able to report many thousands have been received.

"With all good wishes,"

What a gem of a letter and what a purchase!

Further information was included in "Years of Adventure" published to coincide with our Golden Jubilee in 1978.

"There was a large amount of land attached to the building so that the block on the northern side was later sold and the proceeds used to erect a large craft room and the next year five bedrooms were added above the craft room. This room is used for meetings of State Council and Executive, Handicrafts & Home Industries, and for residential craft schools and demonstrations.

"In 1969 under the leadership of Mrs. Hugh Cameron, then State President, a modern bedroom wing was built on the southern side of the main building and at the same time administration was moved from the city and incorporated in the building." (p. 26)

This publication goes on to relate how No.3 Lansell Road became the hub of the Association while the stately old home retained much of its former elegance.

Our much-loved building was designed by Architects Smith & Johnson for a former Premier of Victoria, John Alexander MacPherson in 1876. Being in the late Victorian Italianate style it features bay windows, a tower, a complex hipped roof and profiled chimneys. The circa 1928 Edna Walling garden incorporates lily ponds, wisteria pergolas, stonework and wonderful mature trees.

What a wonderful place to call our CWA home, not only in 1948 but in 2024! I have very special memories of attending the afternoon event in 1998 to mark the 50th anniversary of what we now refer to as Umina.

Yvonne Tindle
Drouin Branch Historian
March 2024



CWA AND ME



Joanne Legg
Communications &
Magazine Committee

As part of our feature on promoting membership and building vibrant branches we asked Joanne Legg, a member of the Communications and Magazine Committee, to tell her story about deciding to become a member. While every member has unique reasons for the decision to join, we think there is a lot which will resonate here for many.

I have just finished marching in the local ANZAC parade under my CWA branch banner with other branch ladies as I sit down to write this article. Rather appropriate I think to myself.

I had never heard of the CWA until I saw a 30-minute TV show featuring Geraldine Doogue. At the end of the show, she mentioned that as well as the traditional 'day' branches, there were branches which met at night. I had just moved back to the Yarra Valley, was still working full time and was looking for a fresh start and thought "Why not? I can't cook, sew or crochet but I'm sure it will be fine!"

Best decision ever.

I had already gone to information nights in relation to the SES and the CFA. They were lovely people and very welcoming but it was well, a little too energetic for me. My idea of exercise is a lovely walk or bike ride followed at the end with a glass of wine, sitting in front of a fire in winter or sitting in a spa in summer.

Well, I said to myself you are never going to find out sitting on your backside at home. Let's give CWA a go!

The first meeting I went to did not actually happen as there were not enough members present for a quorum. The majority of members, I was told, had shuffled off to sunnier climes for the duration of winter. The lovely lady who was running the meeting said "so I propose we adjourn to the pub for a quick chat and a wine before going home". Excellent! The next meeting was the one before the branch AGM and they were looking for a new secretary. "Is it a lot of work?" I asked.

"No, no", I was told. "All you have to do is write up the minutes from each meeting. Piece of cake", they said. Doesn't sound too hard I thought, so I said I would be happy to give it a try.

I went home that night and called my dad, who it turns out, has been secretary for a few clubs over the years.

"How did it go?", he asked.

"Great," I replied. "I put my hand up for the secretary role. They said it's not that hard!" I can still hear him laughing down the phone line even now.

After I became secretary I settled into the role. My aim, I decided, was to make the minutes as interesting as I possibly could to make sure people read them. I must have achieved my goal as members always commented on how they looked forward to reading my minutes. I would pepper pictures and appropriate quotes throughout the minutes to make it more interesting. I even won the Group Secretaries award one year, so I must have been doing something right!

I have learnt a lot from the ladies in my branch, but am also interested in the bigger CWA picture. As a result I have gone to Government House on Australia Day and spent all day learning how to whip cream to go along with the scones we sold as it was open to the public. I have worked a day at the show and have attended every State Conference and AGM since I've been a member.

I do enjoy going to the State AGM. You get to meet so many people and can ask questions about how things work in their branch. The more people I meet and talk to the more I realise that each branch is different and so is each Group. The dinner the night of the first day of the State Conference is also good fun. Each year I and those that have attended from our branch seem to be amongst the first up to dance and the last to leave.

In amongst all this fun we have done a lot with the funds we raise and I am very proud of each and every member of my branch for all we achieve. And yes I have started to learn how to cook. Whipping cream counts, right? And to sew. For the last two years I have joined my CWA BFF Karina and gone away for a craft weekend to Coonawarra. The first year I was a little shy but we had a great chat with other ladies there for the weekend on the Saturday night after dinner (hello ladies, you know who you are). It was a very funny night of life stories shared. It was amazing listening to so many different stories, and how these ladies found their way to CWA.

The second year I went I took my first attempt at a quilt. The corners don't quite match but I love it. It is covered with lots of Dr Who pictures, and I could not have done it without the help of Karina and Jen, members of my branch.

Lots of different ladies have taught me so many different things. The second year at the craft weekend I learnt how to recycle jeans into shopping bags. That was brilliant. I appreciate all the time taken to help not just me but other members and non-members. Our branch has get-togethers that include partners, not something a lot of branches do but it works well for us. I don't have a partner at the moment but I hear Hugh Jackman is single so who knows!!!! At one of these get togethers I took my dad and he is now "stepping out" with one of the members in my group, but that is a story for another time. As it has so far, I'm sure it will work out fine!



10 POINT PLAN TO GROW CWA MEMBERSHIP

Ways to promote membership of CWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few tips to get started
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use social media to promote CWA events, good news stories, interesting photos of get-togethers, stunning craft work, recipes and more...• Facebook, Instagram, Pintrest• It's free to use
Put up membership posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update one of the CWA "Join Us" posters with your Branch contact details and pin it up at your local supermarket, library, community noticeboards etc.• Remember to check them every few weeks
Local Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local newspapers and local radio station need content and love to hear what we're doing so drop them a line, write an article and send them CWA photos• Remember to promote our organisation and how to join every time you get a chance• Make it fun, informative and relevant
Approach a friend or contact and invite them to a CWA meeting or event	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most members join after being approached by a friend or contact• Who are the women who you know locally who might love being a part of the CWA on Victoria?• Invite them to a CWA meeting or event – and make sure they are welcomed and encouraged to join the CWA
Host a New Branch information night	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think about the towns, suburbs or regions who don't have a CWA Branch.• Hosting a New Branch information night is as simple as booking a hall or table at a local café, posting on FaceBook or putting an ad in the local newspaper and see who comes along.• The Association has brochures and presentations ready for you to present to prospective members
Wear your Membership Badge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why not purchase an extra membership badge which you can wear on your jacket when you are out and about in your local community• When you're asked about the CWA – let people know why you love being a member
Local Shows and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be a presence at local shows and events by hosting a CWA stall or table.• Use your local networks including other groups that you are active in to promote and showcase the work you do in CWA• Remember that you are a representative and role-model of the CWA whenever you are out and about in your community
Pop Up Shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pop-up shops are a great source of income, but are also a chance to connect with locals and promote your branch and membership of the Association• Have a little membership flyer handy at all stalls with the Branch contact details and meeting times & venues
Encourage past members to re-join	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When branches close or members have drifted away, make sure your Branch stays in touch and encourages the member to re-join• Don't be afraid to ask our former members to re-join
CWA Merchandise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members of the public love the CWA merchandise including our well-known cook books and tea-towels• When local women are buying up our merchandise – don't forget to ask are you interested in joining?

BUILDING VIBRANT BRANCHES

**CWA IS ABOUT LOCAL WOMEN
GIVING SOMETHING BACK TO LOCAL
AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES
AND MOST IMPORTANTLY
FRIENDSHIP**

When I think of CWA the above statement rings true and is the most important gift we can share with each other in our communities. We are a sisterhood across the world, and we stand together in helping make our world better for women, children and families to live together hopefully in peace and harmony.

In this issue we speak about membership in our branches. How do we increase the number of members but just as importantly, how do we look after the members we have?

We feature three branches who have increased membership in different ways. One is a new branch, another formed just before COVID hit and another is a country branch which has gone from strength to strength. I would say all three branches are made up of loving, caring women who value their members and welcome new ones with open arms regardless of where they come from or who they are. Remember we are non-political, have no religious affiliation but provide a 'safe place' for women to meet, share common interests (cooking, craft, walking, gardening) or share a cuppa.

Please think of ways that you might tackle re-energising your branch, invite a friend to a meeting, or hold a 'tea and scone' afternoon for the community. Never underestimate the power of a cup of tea and a scone!

Above all, treasure the members you have and respect those who have walked before you but please make ALL newcomers feel welcome, loved, needed and respected.

Gwen White
Membership Chair



MACEDON BRANCH

Macedon Branch is one of our oldest branches and was for a long time a stable and successful CWA branch with approximately 14 to 16 members.

Since the end of the COVID lockdowns, the Branch has enjoyed a significant boost to its membership and I chatted to Branch President Valda Laird about what has been behind the increase in members.

Valda mainly puts it down to the diversity of Macedon's members who range from 46 – 85 years of age, plus two junior members who are 14 and 17 respectively. The members are accepting of each other's differences.

Valda also noted that the Branch's active fundraising events including the Easter Raffle (selling tickets on the veranda of the local real estate agent over 5 – 6 days on the weekends heading into Easter), the Christmas Fare (a Central Highlands Group event which is conducted at the Macedon CWA Hall) and other events which take place out and about in the community enable prospective members to come up and chat to our members about the Association and the local branch. Macedon Branch makes sure there are membership 'Join Us' brochures at the ready at all of these local events. Having a larger number of members definitely helps when it comes to sharing the load for fundraising and other events.

Valda also emphasised the importance of the great sense of humour which the Macedon ladies bring with them. This is a key ingredient to ensuring meetings are happy and enjoyed by all.

The Branch also has a significant profile in the Macedon Ranges local community via its active Facebook page – which keeps the community informed on the Branch's activities and events.

Amanda Millar
Editor



WERRIBEE SOUTH BRANCH

In this piece Julie Toffolon, President of the Werribee South Branch speaks of what being a member offers her that connects her to her community and the lives of other women.

There is a richness in our Branch; a tapestry of lives lived, and choices made that have had us come full circle to begin again, taking our place now as community elders with earned wisdom and insight. The familial roles of mother, nurturer and protector now respond with heart and hand to the harshness and inequalities many still face on a daily basis.

Though the largeness of this undertaking can seem daunting and overpowering, we rise in love and friendship to attempt to meet the needs of our most vulnerable women and children.

This fire, I believe, is innate in all women and I have seen it in amazing women so much greater than I and am inspired by their passion and compassion to make this world a better place. It is my hope that others will be inspired by the part our branch plays.

We share the CWA vision anywhere and everywhere because membership is a wonderful gift to give oneself that is like no other. It fills our need for friendship and the joy of service.

It is both a privilege and a blessing to play our part as CWA members; to pick up the threads left by those who have gone before us as members and walk the well-lit, well-trodden path before us.

Everyone is welcome to visit our branch for friendship, a helping hand or to join with us.



BARWON HEADS BRANCH

President Steph Young, Skye Wilson and Secretary Cath Harris. One year ago Cath offered to host an informal meeting in her home and the result was the formation of a young, vibrant group of women calling themselves Barwon Heads CWA. Their first meeting in a local cafe bar saw about 26 ladies turn up and the branch has grown from there! Enthusiasm and a genuine care for each other in the local community sees anyone welcomed with open arms!



AROUND THE BRANCHES

COORDINATOR: PAULA MCGAVIN

MENTONE BRANCH 123READ2ME

In March this year Mentone Branch had a visit from 123Read2Me founder Melinda. Melinda shared her vision and passion as she works towards increasing literacy skills in children.

Melinda saw a need to provide free books to disadvantaged babies and children. Recognising that children quickly grow out of books, by collecting and passing them on, reduces landfill, whilst fulfilling a need. Children need books to be able to read, but they are a luxury when finances are tight.

In 2015, 123Read2Me became a registered charity and public benevolent institution. In 2016, they partnered with the Lions Club of Mordialloc-Mentone Inc. The project has helped 123Read2Me collect, sort, pack and giveaway over 500,000 free books to vulnerable and at-risk children.

With collecting boxes located around the state, the organisation is always looking for volunteers. A warehouse located in Moorabbin houses the donations with sorting and packing days twice per week. Boxes are sent to schools, kindergartens, playgroups, with over 120 organisations supported regularly.



You may have seen a 'free book box' at your local supermarket, fish and chip shop, or Bunnings.

The organisation's goal is to give two books a month to every child under 15 living in poverty.

Our small donation of \$350 plus several bags of books goes only a small way to helping 123Read2Me achieve their goal. However, members have expressed a desire to help sort and pack books and were impressed with Melinda's vision and passion.

If any branch would like to know more, go to 123read2me.org.au

If your branch knows of a local organisation that needs books, please contact info@123read2me.org.au and talk to Melinda or Jeff.

CUDGEWA BRANCH 77TH BIRTHDAY

Cudgewa was formed on the 21st July 1946 by the late Mrs Myrtle Whitehead and some 22 members joined the branch.

In 2022 our Life Member Mrs Lois Jephcott joined Cudgewa, following the closure of the Tintalra branch. As of this point in time we have eight members.

Over the years five members from Cudgewa have served as Group President. They are the late Mrs Elva Vogel (twice), the late Mrs Chloris Kohlman (also twice), Mrs Yvonne Star and Mrs Elaine Heeney. Our Life Member, Mrs Lois Jephcott, has also served twice as Group President.

Cudgewa members over the years have worked very hard with welfare knitting, providing scarves; beanies; rugs and toys for the needy. *Betty's Place Refuge* has received pamper packs from the Branch. Children have also received gifts from Cudgewa Branch.

Cudgewa Branch have made Christmas plum puddings and these are the major fund raiser for the branch. Even today we are very busy making puddings.

The State of Victoria has had many disastrous bush fires; floods and droughts. Cudgewa Branch has always given to assist those appeals co-ordinated by our Association's Headquarters.

Money has also been given to the men's shed; The Corryong Memorial Hall; the SES, local fire brigades, the Cudgewa Hall committee and the Tour de Cure. Our two local schools- Sacred Heart and Corryong College- have both received support. Corryong Food Share was given money to assist in their building appeal. We have also assisted "March on" to help them in their efforts to prevent Veteran Suicide and the saving of lives.

Cudgewa CWA sponsors the Chloris Kohlman Award each year, which assists a student from Corryong College with further education.

The above is a very brief summary of Cudgewa's 77 years of service.

COWES BRANCH

10 Year Service Awards and badges were presented to Cowes Branch President Karen Graham and Julie Pearce. They were thanked for their diligence and volunteer service to CWA and the local community.



DROUIN CWA CELEBRATES 85TH BIRTHDAY

The ladies of the Drouin CWA celebrated our Branch's 85th birthday in style at our recent March meeting. We paid homage to our beginnings by dressing up in our best vintage frocks with hats and gloves to commemorate our very first meeting which took place on the 6th March, 1939. This inaugural meeting was held at the Mechanics Institute in Drouin with sixty ladies present, where our then CWA Group President, Mrs. Kelliher from Neerim South Branch explained the aims and objectives of the Country Women's Association of Victoria which had by then been in existence for eleven years.

At our March meeting our resident historian Yvonne, regaled us with tales of our Branch's catering efforts in our early years, a talent which the ladies put to good use by saving enough money to purchase a block of land to build the clubrooms which we still use to this day. We finished off our meeting with a lovely shared afternoon tea with a hardy few of us also braving the weather at a late afternoon social gathering at a local park to continue the celebrations!



From left to right: Enid Andrews, Minnie Veljkovic, Margaret Tormaj, Noeline France, Helen Molnar, Annette Jager-Glover

DINGLEY VILLAGE BRANCH

A couple of years ago, our CWA Dingley Village branch was approached by the Moorabbin Aircraft Museum committee to help create a unique tribute for ANZAC Day.

We were given the task of creating a sea of poppies to cover 4 camouflage nets to drape over a World War II aeroplane. Our talented members knitted and crocheted thousands of poppies and then attached each one of them with plastic cable ties to the net to create a breathtaking camouflage aircraft blanket.

Our hard work and dedication resulted in a beautiful work of art, which was proudly displayed at the Museum for the ANZAC commemorative period. This "poppy blanket" will be on display again next year.



GEELONG THURINA BRANCH

On Tuesday, 30th April 2024, members from Geelong Thurina Branch set off on our walk to support ACWW in the annual Women Walk the World! Members set off eagerly with small flyers to drop in letterboxes along the way advertising our Group Exhibition on Saturday, 11th May returning to our hall for a delightful morning tea.



SCARSDALE SCRIBE DOUBLE ACT

At the recent Half Yearly Group Conference of the Ballarat and District CWA, Alex Rasmussen was announced as the winner of both the Vi Egan Trophy and the Book of Honour Award for her Secretary's Report for 2023.

Alex has an amazing ability to put pen to paper of the accomplishments and the many events of the active Scarsdale Branch. This is the second year in a row that she has received these awards. Her report has once again been informative, thorough and entertaining and we as a Branch are very proud of her success. Will there be a hat trick in the forthcoming year? Who knows, but I'm sure Alex will be, once again, giving a worthy compilation of the year.

Well done Alex!

An interesting little addition to this story is that the Vi Egan Trophy has been missing in action since 2017 and a lot of Ballarat and District members have been looking in their cupboards, under beds and mantles for this trophy. Lo and behold, the little treasure was found in an Opportunity Shop in Ballan! What a lovely find! The engraving is now up to date, the trophy is shining again and ready for its new home for 12 months.



ESSENDON BRANCH

On Friday, 19th May 2024, the Essendon Branch were asked to cater for a Seniors' Brunch for 150 people hosted by Federal Member Bill Shorten MP along with Services Australia to be held at the Buckley Park Bowling Club. The surprise guest on the day was Prime Minister Anthony Albanese who Bill convinced to call in on his way to the airport after an earlier event in the city. The event was very capably organised by Essendon Branch President Jane Carbone and her very dedicated band of helpers including Kokila Naidu, Deanna Zammit, Lena Roger, Jacquie La Spina, Carmen Di Marco, Janice Young, Maria Candiloro, Helen Ciampa, Maureen Roberts, Roxane Harris, Kaye Murphy, Annie Murphy and Jenny Nola.



BENDIGO BRANCH

On The Buses!

Bendigo Branch supports an initiative of Bendigo Baptist Community Care to increase the services for those living in Bendigo without permanent accommodation. As cold nights begin to make sleeping without shelter in Bendigo more difficult, we have donated beanies, scarves, gloves, some rugs, and underwear, a scarce donation to Op Shops, to this organisation.

We arranged a wonderful adventure on the buses of Bendigo, an extensive network that covers almost the entirety of the area - 17km north to south and 14km east to west. The purpose of the day was to support an Op Shop run by Bendigo Baptist Community Care in the Eaglehawk area, and other Op Shops, and a bakery in Eaglehawk. Another very important aim was to increase the understanding of our members of the public transport options available in Bendigo.

We met at the railway station; 12 members coming into this central spot on buses and in two cars. Then we all boarded a bus to head out to an Op Shop, or two, in California Gully, meeting up with three other members that had come from the other direction. What a great day for the Op Shop as we all made a purchase.

After an hour we were back on a bus to Eaglehawk for a well-deserved lunch in Darcy's Bakery outdoor seating area. Refreshed, it was back on the streets to visit two more Op Shops. The next leg of the journey was on a bus that took us the long way – the road less travelled – back to the station. We dispersed for the home leg on our four different buses, tired but satisfied. During the day we boarded and alighted from a bus 8 times without incident, and we thanked all the drivers for their courteous service – in Bendigo a bus never moves off until all passengers are seated.

The competition for our May meeting was the Op Shop Challenge! - a fashion parade and judging of 'an interesting purchase and best dressed from an Op Shop'. It was a fabulous excursion and I'm sure there will be another bus adventure. We now know that bus travel in Bendigo is safe, convenient, and a lot of fun!

Marilyn Tangey



Brenda, Dawn, Joyce, Bev, Jessie



Margaret and Dawn



Joyce, Bev, Greta



Wendy, Noma, Lyn

Their Memory Lives On

BERYL OLSSON

DROUIN BRANCH members remember **Beryl Olsson** as a fully committed CWA member. She joined our branch in 1981 but, together with her Mum, had previously been a foundation member of the Neerim CWA Branch, first joining when only 19 years old. She juggled twice daily milkings, a large family (including two sets of twins), and her love of CWA. A talented craftsperson, she inspired and mentored many members. Creative Arts Exhibitions benefited by her hands-on involvement as well as exhibits including those of Home Industries. Together with Bonnie Bransgrove, Beryl organised and ran the Knit It Program in our local schools in 1993. The office of President and Vice President were ably carried out many times as well as Competition Secretary, Craft Leader and Co-Ordinator of our branch involvement with Meals on Wheels.

We acknowledge the great contribution Beryl has made to Drouin Branch and CWA Victoria and count our blessings at having had her as a friend and fellow member for so many years. We are grateful to her supportive family who enabled her to remain active in all things CWA. She was 94 when she passed away.

BETHEL MARY PEARSE

EAST WIMMERA CWA members were saddened to learn of the passing of **Mrs Bethel Mary Pearse** at the Donald Nursing Home, on March 1 aged 103 years.

Bethel joined the Country Women's Association as a teenager. She first became a member of Carron Branch, where her mother was a member, just ten years after the CWA had been formed.

Following her marriage to Barney Pearse, she became a member of the Donald Branch where she held several Office Bearer's positions, including President, and was the last President of that branch when it closed in October 2009.

Bethel and Barney, who were married for 69 years, had a son Graeme, and a daughter Rosemary. It was Bethel's wish to always remain a CWA member throughout her life, and it is thanks to her daughter Rosemary that this wish has been carried out.

Bethel was born on Christmas Day 1920, and lived her life according to the Collect.

It was fitting that she passed away on 1 March, the date when the World Day of Prayer is celebrated by all denominations throughout the world, as she worked hard for many years organising this day locally.

Rest in Peace Bethel.

BRENDA ASQUITH

INVERLOCH BRANCH is saddened by the sudden passing on 14 January of our member and friend **Brenda Asquith**.

Brenda was one of our longest serving members with over 30 years of service to the Country Women's Association. She was a member of the Carana Branch in Wonthaggi then moved to Inverloch when that Branch closed.

Brenda loved CWA and was our competition secretary and ticket writer for the Gippsland Hills Exhibition. She entered the Gippsland Hills and State Exhibitions winning many prizes for her card making, paper tole pictures and lately with diamond dot art.

Brenda will be sadly missed at our Branch and will forever live in our hearts.

May she rest in peace.

COLLEEN GEYER and EILEEN DOERING

The MILDURA/MILLEWA GROUP wish to acknowledge the recent passing of two valued members, **Colleen Geyer** and **Eileen Doering**.

Colleen was a member of the Red Cliffs Branch. When this Branch closed, she joined the Irymple Branch, where she held many official positions at Branch level. When Irymple closed, she transferred to Carinya Branch. In 2003/4 Colleen took on the role of Group President and was also Group Secretary for many years.

Colleen was a talented member of the choir, drama and song in costume group.

Eileen Doering was a member of the Carwarp Branch for many years, holding numerous official positions and served as Group President in 1993/4.

When Carwarp Branch closed Eileen transferred to Carinya Branch, where she will be remembered especially for her talented craft work.

Colleen and Eileen contributed much to the Country Women's Association over many years. May they rest in peace.

JEANETTE DRAGT

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Past Group President **Jeanette Dragt** on 20 April 2024. Jeanette joined MEREBURN Branch with her sister and quickly became a leader in the Branch. She held the position of Secretary a few times, Group Secretary and Group President of Geelong. Jeanette was a loyal friend and mentor and will be sadly missed by her CWA friends and family. RIP Jeanette.

Their Memory Lives On

JEMAH BURLEY

FRANKSTON Branch were saddened by the sudden death of their junior member, **Jemah Burley**. Jemah had been a member for 12 years, joining at 8 years of age. She was a talented member who regularly won prizes in the Group exhibition. Jemah helped with many activities. RIP Jemah.

MARGARET COX

BROADFORD MT PIPER members are saddened by the passing of **Margaret Cox**. She was a member of Seymour branch for many years. Margaret joined Broadford Mt Piper for a short time when the Seymour branch was closed. Margaret was a group president on two occasions and on the club committee; she also held many branch positions. Margaret was a great cook, she put in many entries at out group creative art exhibitions and always helped stock up fund raising stalls. She was also a lovely knitter and crocheted many beautiful rugs. She loved and enjoyed going on the mystery trips we had. Margaret was a lovely lady who will be sadly missed.

MARGARET MARTIN

KEILOR DOWNS Branch members are saddened by the sudden loss of long time member **Margaret Martin**. Margaret led an active life, always optimistic and cheerful. She looked forward to our meetings and outings and when there was food to be shared we especially looked forward to her 'Jelly Slice'. Missed by us all.

MARGRET BROCK

SHEPPARTON SUNSET members mourn the passing of **Margret Brock**. Margret was a foundation member when the Branch formed in July 2009. During her time at the Branch, Margret was President for a term and was always willing to be involved in all branch activities. Her skills in cooking, preserves and broad skills in all aspects of crafting were wonderful resulting in her winning many prizes at local and state level. However, due to declining health in recent years, Margret had to give up her membership. She was a great member and we remember her input at branch level, her friendship and generosity. Our thoughts are with her family.

MAUREEN SIINMAA

Vale Maureen

Our dear long-time Catering Officer, fabulous cook, talented Song and Costume performer and wonderful friend has left us with happy memories of good times spent together over many years in **Lowanna Hills/Newborough CWA Branch**.

SHIRLEY LINDSAY

DRYSDALE BRANCH members remember with love our dear friend and long time member, **Shirley Lindsay** (1986 to 2023).

Shirley was involved in many organisations within the community. She wore many hats with CWA and her wealth of knowledge was highly valued within the Branch. She was Secretary and a committee member for many years and a tireless worker for the catering team, baking her beautiful sponges.

One of our enduring memories of Shirley is of her much-loved position as Birthday Lady, when she would give a present to the member who had a birthday that month. She always finished with a joke or funny story which left us chuckling.

We will miss your friendship and guidance. Rest in peace Shirley.

WILMA DAWSON

Members of the DINGWALL BRANCH are saddened by the passing of one of our longtime members, **Wilma Dawson** aged ninety three.

Wilma was a loyal member of our branch for many years until ill health did not allow her to attend meetings.

A well-known member of one of the longstanding pioneering families of the local small rural farming community of Normanville, near Kerang, Wilma was involved in many committees in the district, and will be sadly missed by all who knew her. Vale Willie.



Photo by Aaron Burden on Unsplash



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

care empower contribute

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