



ZONTA
CLUB OF
MELBOURNE
ON YARRA INC
MEMBER OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

Yarra Yarns

May 2024



In this issue:

- **President's Report**
- **Welcome to our New Board**
- **Young Women in Public Affairs Award 2024 Winner**
- **Refugee Week 2024**
- **National NAIDOC Week**
- **The Zonta Rose Story**
- **Recommended Reads for Refugee Week**

President's Report

Since 2009, there's been an annual Walk Against Family Violence in Melbourne's CBD each November to mark the start of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gendered-Based Violence. Each year Zonta clubs have attended and last year saw over 5,000 people from women's groups, police and emergency services, unions and organisations from the family violence sector do the walk from Parliament to Carlton Gardens. While it is a chance to stand up and be counted and meeting like-minded people - for me, after going to eight of these walks, it feels like I've seen the show before.



But this April we saw something different. On April 28, more than 10,000 walked from Melbourne's State Library to the CBD in a peaceful non-partisan march to protest against violence towards women and Australia's response to this. Just one of many marches held in towns and cities nationwide, it felt like a tipping point with the call for change having a specificity and immediacy missing in the past. I am now hearing the voices of those who work on the front line of women's safety and those with lived experience talking about the kinds of things that will save lives today. I sincerely hope this results in actions and practical measures being taken that will stop women being killed.

Club news

At our April club meeting we discussed the results of our member survey taken at the start of the year. This was especially useful in identifying members' skills, why they are still in the club and how we can improve member engagement. Each club committee will act on the results and report back over the year. We will make this an annual process.

At the same meeting we heard from Eva Foreman, Fundraising and Campaigns Director for 'One Girl', a Melbourne-based charity that supports girls' education in Sierra Leone. 'One Girl' started 15 years ago and now supports 300 girls across 23 schools to help them with the innumerable barriers they face accessing education and staying in school.

Our May meeting had an African focus, with a presentation by Dr Janice Smith on the work by 'Wise Choices for Life' in partnership with Ugandan communities. The focus is on reproductive health literacy to tackle the causes of inter-generational poverty, high fertility and maternal mortality. This was a fascinating talk, and we are all much more educated ourselves of the knowledge on how the actuals of reproduction can be the beginning of real change for women. And yes, our birthing kits do go to Uganda, but it is hoped the outcomes of 'Wise Choices for Life' education programs mean these will not be needed as much.



Left: Eva Foreman (One Girl) & Right: Dr Janice Smith (Wise Choices for Life)



On the subject of birthing kits, in June we are supporting two birthing kits assembly events – one at Xavier College and one at Ivanhoe Girls Grammar and we, as a club, will pack 400 at our August meeting so be prepared for a fast and fun assembly!

Thanks also for all your hard work at the Lion's Club Op-Shop and the Bunning Sausage sizzle – both are very useful fundraising activities for the club.

As we head into winter, our next two meetings will be on Zoom, which means you can join in from wherever you are. I look forward to seeing you all then.

Caroline Kettle, President

Welcome to our New Board

At our May meeting we welcomed in the new Board. The powerhouse team will steer the ship at Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra for the upcoming year. Thank you so much for your efforts and dedication!



L - R: Melinda Young (Treasurer), Caroline Kettle (President), Debra Maiden (Vice President), Janet Townsend (Secretary), Julie Pincombe (Director), Devika Fernando (Director), Sandra Burns (Director) and Gail Neil (Correspondence Secretary).

Young Women in Public Affairs Award 2024 Winner

Sue Lees and Sandra Burns presented the YWPA certificate to Charlize Chow from Camberwell Girls' Grammar School at their school assembly in April. The school, family and students were delighted, particularly because Karen Zhang from their school won the award in 2016.

Charlize and her family as well as a staff from the school will attend ZCMOY's August meeting, we look forward to meeting her.

Sahez Singh, runner-up from Aitken College, will also attend the August meeting along with her family and the Principal from Aitken College.



L-R: Kath Woolcock (Head of Senior School), Sue Lees (ZCMOY YWPA Award Coordinator), Charlize Chow (YWPA 2024), Sandra Burns (ZCMOY), Debbie Dunwoody (Principal)

Contribution by Sue Lees and Sandra Burns

Refugee Week 2024 - 16 to 22 June

Refugee Week welcomes refugees and people seeking asylum, celebrates their achievements as well as to raise awareness of the challenges facing refugees and asylum seekers. The week aligns with World Refugee Day on 20 June - an international day designated by the United Nations to honour refugees around the globe.

The [Refugee Week 2024 poster](#) is available for download for print or web. Please encourage your contacts (school, community space or organisation) to download and display the poster.

The Refugee Council of Australia has a calendar of events that you can join in: https://action.refugeecouncil.org.au/rw_events.

Back Your Neighbour campaign

Thousands of asylum seekers are currently living without support while their claims for refugee status are being processed. Some people have been waiting almost a decade for a final decision.



The Back Your Neighbour campaign urges the Federal Government to:

- Provide everyone with a valid visa with work, travel and study rights.
- Expand the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) eligibility criteria and simplify the application process so that people in need can access health care, disability, housing support and other essential services.
- Ensure an independent, timely and fair application and merits review process for all humanitarian applications.
- Provide people who have received a negative refugee determination under the 'Fast Track' system with a fair review process.
- Continue to invest resources to urgently clear the backlog of asylum applications and appeals.
- Abolish temporary visas like Temporary Protection Visas and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas and replace them with permanent protection visas and pathways to citizenship for all humanitarian arrivals.

Sign the petition: <https://www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/support-people-seeking-asylum-and-refugees>

You can also collect signatures and email it back to: contact@backyourneighbour.com.au with the template: https://backyourneighbour.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/BYN-Petition-2023-support-people-seeking-asylum-and-refugees_form.pdf

National NAIDOC Week (July) - Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud & Proud

National NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia in the first week of July each year (7 - 14 July 2024), to celebrate and recognise the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC Week is an opportunity for all Australians to learn about First Nations cultures and histories and participate in celebrations of the oldest, continuous living cultures on earth.

This year's theme is **Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud & Proud**. NAIDOC Week is celebrated by local community events taking place across Australia. Find an event: <https://www.naidoc.org.au/local-events/local-naidoc-week-events>

The Supporting NAIDOC Toolkit provides guidance to help inspire your team, workplace, school, club or community group to celebrate National NAIDOC Week. Join in celebrating Blak excellence and amplify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices: <https://www.naidoc.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/2024-02/supporting-NAIDOC-toolkit.pdf>



50 Amazing Tidda Queens

Strong women are so important for our next generation of girls. Read about Indigenous women - role models who show through fortitude and belief in themselves that they can achieve.

[50 Proud and Strong Indigenous Women \(teaandbelle.com\)](https://teaandbelle.com)

The Zonta Rose Story



To us the beauty of a single yellow rose has been a favourite Zonta symbol for nearly 20 years. The "Zonta Rose" was introduced at the 1984 Sydney Convention, thanks to the dedication and support of District 16 Zontians.

In 1983, then Lieutenant Governor of District 16 (New Zealand), Valerie Webster, proposed that a breed of roses be developed

as a living symbol of Zonta International. The renowned England-based nursery Harkness Roses worked to cultivate the flower, while Zontian Maureen Ross of Ross Roses in Adelaide, Australia enabled it to be introduced at the Convention.

Today, the lovely yellow bloom can be seen in members' gardens, memorial plantings, schools, hospitals, homes for the elderly, and in the forecourt of Australia's National Parliament in Canberra. A Zonta Rose Bed was inaugurated at Bältesspännarparken in Gothenburg, Sweden, as part of the 2002 Zonta International Convention festivities.

The Zonta Rose itself has bright yellow blooms, produced in large sprays, and neatly spaced to form a bouquet. Each bloom is formed on its own long stem and has a particularly long life, whether on the bush or cut. Its fragrance is light and pleasant, while gardeners will appreciate that it is easy to grow and hardy, reaching an average of 1.2 meters in height. The Zonta Rose is registered internationally under the name "Hartanna". It also goes by the name "Princess Alice" in Canada and the UK, and "Bright Lites" in the USA.

Each feature of the Zonta Rose has a special significance:

- The ROOTS signify the foundation of Zonta, our objectives, mission and our history.
- The TRUNK stands for our strength and ability to unite to advance the status of women.
- The BRANCHES symbolize the network and direction of many clubs in many countries, improving the lives of many women.
- The LEAVES represent growth of our personal lives and the Zonta organization.
- The STEMS signify the links between clubs and members.
- The multiple BLOOMS represent Zonta's diversity in membership, while the BUDS characterize new members to be nurtured and treasured.
- The ROSE epitomizes Zonta friendship and mutual support, with the intertwined golden yellow PETALS embodying the principles of Zonta - honesty and trustworthiness.
- Finally, the PERFUME is the gift to our fellow man, representing Zonta service to the local and global community.

But the Zonta Rose is much more than a lovely flower. Since 1999, it has served as the symbol of Zonta Rose Day, which falls on 8 March and coincides with International Women's Day. On this special day, Zontians worldwide are encouraged to publicly distribute yellow roses or items bearing the image of yellow roses, accompanied by information about Zonta International and issues relating to improving the lives of women.

You can see the Zonta Rose at the Victorian State Rose Garden: [Zonta | Victoria State Rose Garden, Werribee Park \(vicstatetate.org.au\)](https://www.vicstatetate.org.au)

Contributed by Gail Neil

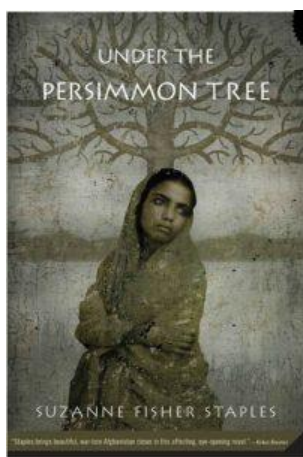
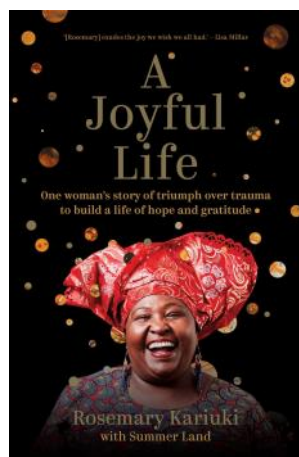
Recommended Reads for Refugee Week and NADIOC Week

A Joyful Life: One Woman's Story of Triumph Over Trauma to Build a Life of Hope and Gratitude by Rosemary Kariuki

A Joyful Life is the astonishing memoir of Rosemary Kariuki, one of Australia's most beloved Local Heroes. Long before she was advocating for refugee and migrant women just like herself, Rosemary was a survivor like no other.

As a child, she survived the first of many predators in her home. As a teen, she survived the first of three infant losses. In her twenties, she survived years of domestic violence. In her thirties, she survived political unrest and tribal clashes that brought a hammer crashing down on her head.

But what makes Rosemary's journey so remarkable is not just how she survived, but also how she came to find joy: an infectious joy that she has gone on to share with countless others.



Under the Persimmon Tree by Suzanne Fisher-Staples

This widely acclaimed novel explores the relationship between a young American woman and an Afghan girl, Najmah, who is all alone in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. The story follows Najmah's perilous journey through the mountains in search for safety and refuge in Pakistan.

Asylum: Voices Behind the Razor Wire by Heather Tyler

This is a collection of first-hand accounts describing what has driven people seeking asylum to flee their homelands to come to Australia seeking refuge, and detailing the traumas involved both in flight from their homes and in detention on Australian shores. Tyler also looks at Australia's perception of people seeking asylum and media portrayals.

Find more books: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/books/>

Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra would like to thank the following for their support:

