



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

Yarra Yarns

August 2024



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President's Report

Of the many things I learnt at the recent Zonta International Convention in Brisbane, an important one was that we, like all Zonta clubs, need to be a visible voice for Zonta's aims so I have been reflecting on what we have done and what we could do to increase our club's visibility.

Over the last few years our social media reach has expanded considerably because we constantly add new and interesting posts to our Facebook and Instagram pages, increasing our visibility.



At the Alphington Football Club's Under 12 Girls' team

Each time we run a birthing kit event outside our club, we raise awareness about Zonta and our club. Every breast care cushion assembly day held in partnership with another group means about another ten women learn about us. Each breast care cushion delivered includes a card introducing our club to the recipient.

When we attend an event hosted by a like-minded group, we learn about their work and they learn about ours. Lately, every time we have a speaker from an allied organisation, we add the club's email to their newsletter or mailing list.

All these actions have raised our visibility, but these are the quick wins. Real connections with local groups take time. As we have a marquee, we were visible at Alphington Football Club ground last year, but this year we were not only visible but welcomed back - a big win! Likewise, our relationship with Carlton Football Club will take some years and solid club commitment to achieve long term visibility at Carlton Respects matches.

We do need to improve the visibility of our awards as we find it difficult to get widespread promotion to reach a diverse cohort of applicants for most awards – so something to think about and improve on.

All our relationships with other organisations and sponsors have happened because individual members have made a connection and followed through to make it a club connection. Thanks to you all who have done the hard yards to improve both our viability and visibility.

Think about what you could do to increase our club's visibility. Perhaps start sharing our social media posts or provide us with a connection – all suggestions very welcome!

I'm looking forward to the day when I say I say I am a member of Zonta and the response is 'Oh, Zonta, yes I know about Zonta' rather than 'What is Zonta?'.

Caroline Kettle, President

Zonta International Convention 2024 - Brisbane



How wonderful it was that so many of our Club members could attend the convention this year. I was blown away with the enormity and atmosphere of the event. I learnt so much about the organisation and reinforced what a fantastic organisation it is. The Convention introduced 4 Zonta International Goals for 2024-26; we plan to revisit these goals and focus our work on these areas.

- Credible and visible voice
- Club Success
- Leadership and Sustainability
- Engagement of audiences and allies



Exceptional Presenters: The programme was inspiring including high calibre speakers with Rabia Siddique (Human Right Lawyer) through her personal experiences shining a light on the ZI Mission to eliminate family violence and providing a master class on women leading under pressure.

Lisa Blair (Sailor) was awe inspiring depicting her world class achievements on her yacht " Climate Action Now". She became the fastest person in the world to sail, solo, non-stop around Antarctica.

Humanitarian work worldwide: Presentations on how Zonta's fund raising benefits so many women and girls around the world in programmes partnered with UNICEF were of value and I encourage you all to check out further details on the website. Who would have thought that simply by providing reuseable sanitary products to girls in many countries is key to keeping girls at school and helping them to complete their education. This is key to stopping the cycle of poverty, discrimination and lack of opportunity.

An important milestone for us in Australia was the official launch of Zonta Australia at the convention. This puts us in a much better position to influence and have our voices heard on behalf of women and girls.

Our fundraising committee did a wonderful job in organising the Clubs marketplace sock stall. This was a great success with all socks sold out!



Zonta fellowship spread throughout the event culminating in a wonderful, fun filled farewell function.



The next Convention is in Vancouver in 2026, so if you missed out this time I would encourage you to start planning now.



Article by Debra Maiden

Guest Speakers at ZCMOY March 2024 Meeting - Women Taking Climate Action Award Winners 2023

The Women Taking Climate Action award recognises women whose climate actions contribute towards climate change innovation and engage with women.

At the 2023 D23 conference it was passed that this award, from 2024, will become a D23 project and all District 23 Clubs will be invited to contribute towards the cost of the award which is usually \$1000.00

For 2023 we have co-winners who have each received \$1000, due to a generous 'one-off' donation which has enabled each winner to receive \$1000.

The co-winners – Dr/Professor Anne Poelina, a Nyikina Warra woman from the Kimberley region of WA, and Alana Mountain (non-indigenous) from Victoria spoke at the March ZCMOY meeting – Anne joining us by video and Zoom, Alana in person.

Two outstanding women who share a strong connection to 'caring for country' – the essence of and reason for caring about climate action.

Alana's statement in her application about her ethos of action was: 'I acknowledge First Nations Justice, gender equality and environmentalism as the basis of my work. I believe in connecting people back to the land to protect and conserve it for future generations. I strive for a healthier planet for all inhabitants.'

This is where we want to be as a nation – a respect for western and indigenous knowledge, a working partnership.

Also, in common is the fact that both women are excellent role models, emphasise advocacy, community education and add a high level of scientific and academic understanding to their work.

Alana Mountain, from Victoria, is the Campaign Coordinator of the Forest Collective. With her award we can celebrate and acknowledge 10 years of determination and dedication to protect the beautiful flora and fauna of the Central Highlands of Victoria. Her efforts have helped culminate in the decision by the Victorian government to end the logging of native forests by 1st January 2024; a decision that will help protect the densest carbon-rich plant on earth – Mountain Ash, the forest that we need to survive and the endangered Greater Glider.



Alana Mountain, WTCA award winner 2023 speaking at ZCMOY March meeting.

Alana has encouraged women to become tree climbers, an activity that was largely considered male. This supported the collection of data to show the effects of logging on native wildlife – particularly the endangered Greater Glider. This research was used in a legal case to show successfully that the logging industry had not been taking the necessary studies and steps to protect the Greater Glider. This legal decision managed to ultimately shut down the logging of native forests in Victoria due to the legal, economic, and political ramifications of the decision.

Dr/Professor Anne Poelina is a Nyikina Warrwa woman from the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. She is a community leader, human and Earth rights advocate. She is linked to the land and water of the Kimberley Region and has for many years helped heal country, climate, and communities in this region.

Anne is currently a Professor and Research Fellow at Notre Dame University WA, Charles Darwin University NT, and ANU. She is Chair of the Martuwarra Fitzroy Council and a member and director of the Kimberley Land Council and is involved with the Murray Darling Basin as its inaugural indigenous member on the Advisory Committee on Social, Economic and Environmental Sciences.

Anne is recognised globally for her work with climate and water justice and with First Nations women – giving them opportunities to have a voice and leadership opportunities. She sees her role as protecting 'Mother Earth' and the importance of indigenous knowledge in being able to do this. She says that traditional women's law is about maintaining and protecting the spirit of the country, and that is central to protecting humanity now. Anne promotes two-way science, which connects Western and indigenous knowledge.

She works nationally and internationally as a water management advisor and is very concerned with protecting the Fitzroy River in the Kimberley area. She has also just been appointed to the Australian Productivity Commission to work in water management.



Dr/Professor Anne Poelina, WTCA award winner 2023 spoke on Zoom and video at ZCMOY March meeting.

Dr/Professor Anne Poelina was guest speaker at the Zonta Says Now Intercontinental group, hosted by Australia, in April 2024 and impressed members across the world with her First Nations' philosophy towards the environment and dealing with climate change.

Article by Sue Lees

Young Women in Leadership Award (YWLA) 2024

The winner of the YWPA award for 2024 is Charlize Chow from Camberwell Girls' Grammar School.

Sandra Burns and I had the pleasure of presenting Charlize with the award at a school assembly on Tuesday 30 April. Charlize, staff, students and Charlize's family were delighted for Charlize to be recognised as a significant young female leader.

Charlize is an amazing all-rounder. Like many YWPA winners before her - she inspires, leads, initiates and is dedicated to serving communities around her. Charlize is currently President of the Leo Club of Melbourne (Young Lions group) and has used her presidency and time with the organisation to cultivate a culture of leadership and service, to grow membership and to mentor the young women in the club to become more confident in voicing their opinions and concerns.

At school Charlize has held numerous leadership positions and is a respected leader amongst her peers. She has school awards for service, drama, music, sport, debating and House.

She has already immersed herself in women's issues and support: fundraising and assembling Zonta Birthing Kits; packing menstrual supplies for 'Days for Girls' organisation which is dedicated to supporting menstrual health in developing countries; supporting the River Nile program which provides education support to refugee and asylum-seeker school-aged young women who have recently arrived in Australia. As well Charlize has taken the opportunities locally, nationally, and internationally to speak publicly – and some of these talks have been on topics related to women.

Due to the sponsorship of Calan Wealth Management of \$1000 for the award - for the first time, ZMCOY were able to offer a Runner Up award of \$500.

Sahez Singh is a student at Aitken College, Greenvale.

Like Charlize, Sahez is recognised for her mature approach to combining academic studies, school leadership roles and volunteer activities inside and outside of school.

Currently Sahez is the College Student Council Captain. She has had many leadership roles including STEM Ambassador.

Outside of school she has supported the Craigieburn Unit of the Victoria State Emergency Service (SES) and the Craigieburn War Memorial and Remembrance Committee with PR - developing web sites, videos, social media pages and print media. Sahez is recognised as being highly articulate, having excellent communication skills and able to work effectively with a wide variety of volunteer groups and age groups.

At the ZCMOY Awards Night in August, we had the delight of presenting two Young Women in Leadership awards:

- to Charlize Chow, who has also been awarded Young Leo of the Year (Junior Lions group). Charlize spoke about the challenges still facing women in Australia such as the gender pay gaps and the 'not quite equal' tag that women still feel in society in relation to their own personal worth.



Charlize Chow, YWLA 2024 Award Winner

- Sahez Singh, Runner-Up, from Aitken College, spoke sincerely about her concerns for women in developing economies who still suffer immense roadblocks to equality. This concern arising from being born in Africa, having lived in India and now Australia.



Sahez Singh, YWLA 2024 Award Runner-Up

It was fantastic that both schools had senior staff attend – the Principal of Aitken College and the Learning Coordinator of Camberwell Girls' Grammar. Both girls are held in very high esteem at the schools for their community involvement and the role modelling they provide to other students – true leaders of now and the future.

Article by Sue Lees

Zonta Says Now

Following the launch of Zonta Australia, Zonta Says Now is now known as Zonta says Now Australia.

Meetings will be held every 2nd month (even number months) on the second Saturday of the month and Zonta Says Now Intercontinental meeting s will be held every 2nd month (odd number months).

For meeting dates, times and to register Zoom attendance go to <https://zontasaysnow.org.au/>.



Previous meeting updates:

D23 Zonta Says Now (ZSN) and Zonta Says Now Intercontinental have been successfully highlighting the need for climate change to be viewed as a humanitarian, justice, economic, social, and political issue for women as well as a science issue.

- At the February meeting, we heard from Catelyn Richards – Nurses for Climate Change and centred on issues of health for women in relation to climate change.
- At the April Meeting, we heard from Dr Diane Kraal who has been involved in a group publishing by members of Monash University on the topic of climate justice in relation to COP themes.

Go to <https://zontasaysnow.org.au/think-tank/> to catch up on these talks and meetings.

Contribution by Sue Lees

A Breast Cushion Crisis, Rovers to the Rescue!

On Saturday 17th August, the club held a successful pilot sewing afternoon with a group of Rovers Scouts (18–25-year-olds) at their scout hall in Essendon. Nine club members, Jennifer Ray's friend Ruth and seven Rovers spent the afternoon engaging in all different aspects of the breast cushion making process, helping where needed and picking up new skills along the way.

Not only were 78 cushions stuffed and stitched, we also taught various stages from cutting out cushions and drawstring bags, sewing techniques such as French seams, sewing on lace, sewing straps, ironing on logos, threading ribbon, stuffing cushions through to putting completed cushions with a card into the drawstring bags. The insert card was updated to acknowledge the assistance of Rovers Scouts and their logo matched beautifully with the colours on our card - very impressive!



Ellen (wearing the beanie in the photo) belongs to another unit and took whatever was cut out on the day (30 cushions and straps) plus bags cut out ready for sewing, to her local unit for them to hold a sewing night!!

We all thought it was such an enjoyable afternoon with a lovely group of Rovers. So many great conversations around the room. The energy and enthusiasm of youth is contagious. I personally found the experience very invigorating and would be interested in holding another one.

We stopped for afternoon tea and took the opportunity to login to the Zonta Says Now Australian think tank. Thank you to all members who provided afternoon tea delights – they were delicious as usual. Thank you to Jas Best from my work who suggested the Rovers could have a sewing afternoon as being scouts, they all have a sewing badge.

Contribution by Jasmine Koch

North East Link Tunnel Boring Machines - 'Zelda' and 'Gillian'

The North East Link's first tunnel boring machines (TBM) has begun its journey from Watsonia to Bulleen, creating the northbound section of the 6.5km North East Link tunnels.

The two TBMs are named 'Zelda' and 'Gillian', honouring two local legends from our community. TBM 'Zelda' has now begun digging one of the North East Link twin tunnels with TBM 'Gillian' to also begin tunnelling in the coming weeks.

Each TBM is 90 metres long, 15.6 metres wide and weighs more than 4000 tonnes.

Zelda D'Aprano AO (1938-2018) was a lifelong activist for gender equality and a key player in a long campaign by many remarkable women in fighting for equal pay. Dr. Gillian Opie is a neonatal paediatrician at the Mercy Hospital for Women in Heidelberg and founder of Australia's first breast milk bank for sick and premature babies.



Local legends Zelda D'Aprano and Dr Gillian Opie

Both groundbreaking women from Melbourne's north east, Zelda and Gillian were selected from hundreds of submissions of 'local legends' as part of a TBM naming competition, with their names to adorn the massive machines that will build the North East Link tunnels.

Read more here about Zelda and Gillian's significant contributions to the community: <https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/news/north-east-link/highlighting-local-legends-as-first-tunnel-boring-machine-breaks-ground>

Contribution by Janet Townsend

ZEDX Talk: Hear Their Voice: 'Deadly' First Nations Women's Forum (Thursday 5 September)

The 2024 ZEDX Talk - Hear Their Voice: 'Deadly' First Nations Women's Forum is a chance to Hear their Voice regarding the journey they have taken and continue to be on, as they strive to bring significant change and achieve success in their field of expertise, and ultimately, in their community. The challenges they have faced and the lessons they have learned as First Nations Women are important for us to know. We need to understand how we can genuinely support them to address the challenges and sustain authentic change for our First Nations people of Australia.

Details:

Thursday 5 September, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

(Doors open at 7.00pm, with tea, coffee, and biscuits available)

Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School (Performing Arts Centre—
Cnr Upper Heidelberg Rd & Noel St Ivanhoe)

Tickets \$20 adult, \$10 student

<https://events.humanitix.com/heartheirvoiceforum>

Funds raised support the development of a Leadership Award for First Nations Young Women

For enquiries, please contact Suzanne Lees (0400 753 007)

Birthing Kits Assembly

This year, we have supported birthing kit assembling sessions at Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School, Xavier College, and an introductory session at Camberwell Girls' Grammar School.

We are requested to help with the assembly session at Camberwell Girls' Grammar on Friday 18 October, 10.55am – 1pm. Please let Sue Lees (sue.lees@iinet.net.au or 0400753007) know if you can attend.

Please also note that the ZCMoY birthing kit assembly session will be held at the Amora Hotel during our October meeting.



Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School Birthing Kit assembly

African Fashion at the NGV

The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) is currently hosting the vibrant "Africa Fashion" exhibition, showcasing a spectacular array of 200 works from over 50 designers across 22 African countries. This landmark exhibition, on display until 6 October 2024, celebrates the rich history and dynamic creativity of African fashion, blending couture, textiles, photography, and film. It highlights both historical garments linked to African independence and contemporary designs from trailblazing creators.



"This is about us being us, away from the white gaze," says Dr Christine Checinska, the curator of Africa Fashion at the NGV (Supplied: NGV/ Eugene Hyland)

The exhibition offers a unique chance to explore the vibrant cultural tapestry of African fashion, from revolutionary pieces that defined eras to modern designs that push boundaries. Whether you're captivated by the stunning Afrotopia room or inspired by the politically charged textiles, "Africa Fashion" promises an unforgettable journey through colour, creativity, and history. Don't miss out - immerse yourself in the glamour and innovation of Africa's fashion scene!

"Massively uplifting" – The Telegraph

Contribution by Alex Meagher



Book Review: Normal Women by Philippa Gregory: Nine Hundred Years of Making History

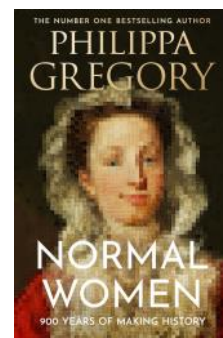
As the title says, this book covers over nine hundred years of English women's history, from the Norman Conquest to 1964. It took Philippa Gregory 10 years to write and runs to more than 500 pages, with extensive endnotes and a 30-page index. Rather daunting, so I chose the audio version, read by Gregory herself and, four weeks later, I am still listening to the last few chapters.

With each part of the book focusing on a different era, it is best enjoyed at a moderate pace – not because it is difficult but because it is fascinating to hear the stories of women, most of whom lived everyday lives, trying to gain agency within the social constraints and expectations placed on them and there are so many of these stories.

The book covers hundreds of women - mothers, wives, daughters, soldiers, protesters, doctors, factory workers, suffragettes, guild widows, pirates, highwaywomen, women husbands, whores, weavers, murderers, boxers and brides to name a few.

Gregory has a novelist sense of story and character and tells small stories about these women to illustrate the times they lived through and uses the 'compulsive habit of men, through history, to define the 'nature of women' to show what women were up against. While challenging at times, it is astonishing, inspirational and heartbreaking in equal measure.

Contribution by Caroline Kettle



Book Recommendation: The Island of Sea Women

The Island of Sea Women by Lisa See (Historical fiction), tells the story of two best friends, Young Sook and Mi-ja, girls from different backgrounds which eventually impacts their friendship.

The story is set on the Korean island of Jeju where the women are the chief breadwinners working in an all-female diving collective (the Haenyeo). Through their story we learn about a country ravaged by decades of conflict and the effect of foreign occupation and intervention. It is also a story of female friendships, misunderstandings and forgiveness.

Contribution by Julie Pincombe



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

