



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

Yarra Yarns

November 2024



In this issue:

- **President's Report**
- **Hear Their Voice 'Deadly' First Nations Women's Forum**
- **News from previous Young Women in Leadership Award winners**
- **2024 District 23 Women Taking Climate Action Award**
- **Birthing Kits with Camberwell Girls' Grammar School**
- **Radio Eastern 98.1 FM - Hello Zindagi**
- **Zonta Says Now**
- **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence & ZCMOY Activities**
- **Ethical Gifts Ideas**
- **Multicultural Women's Alliance Against Family Violence**
- **Book & Drama Mini-Series Recommendations**

President's Report

Over this year I have appreciated the many times I have met face-to-face with other members at club meetings, breast care cushions assembly days at members' homes and organised social events. Each time I came away knowing more about individual members: what they like, what they do not and what binds them to our club. We are certainly a diverse bunch from many different backgrounds and each of us brings a unique life experience to the club.

Rather than these differences dividing us, being united by a common purpose: advancing the status of women worldwide, means we all get along well and enjoy each other's company.

We've recently seen how easy it is to polarise people along cultural, racial and gender lines for political gain and the power of misinformation, so I am proud to be part of an international organisation that keeps it real: one that understands and speaks up with authority about real issues affecting women and girls worldwide and supports programs that help girls and women in real ways.

We must keep our club voice out there, which is why our social media posts are so important. We have so much to 'like' and 'share', particularly during our social media campaign for the upcoming 16 Days of Activism. A lot of work has gone into creating interesting daily posts that aim to end gender-based violence so please do share these widely.

Also, take the time to look through our Facebook posts and you will see it has yet again been a busy and productive year. With much thanks and appreciation for all you have done for the club, I wish you all a happy festive season and restful summer break. See you in February!

Caroline Kettle, President



ZCMOY Facebook posts

Hear Their Voice 'Deadly' First Nations Women's Forum (5 September 2024)

The Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra, in conjunction with the 'Fired Up' reconciliation student group at Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School, ran a forum: **Hear their Voice 'Deadly' First Nations Women**, which was the opportunity to hear the voice of four 'deadly' (which means in Australian indigenous slang 'fantastic') First Nations women talk about: their personal stories and successes; the ways that they support their communities and ultimately Australia as a nation; how they can best be supported by other women and the community as a whole.

One hundred and fifty attendees on the night, including Narelle Umbers, Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School Principal, members of the School Board, students, staff and parents, Debbie Schmidt - District 23 Governor, Zonta members and the wider community.

Apologies and statements of support were received from three Federal members of parliament, including Hon. Kate Thwaites, Federal Member for Jagajaga and Assistant Minister for Women who wrote: "I recognise that this event brings an important lens to issues facing women in our communities and further afield". Senator Dorinda Cox, spokesperson for the Greens re First Nations wrote: "This event is an important discussion which needs to be had and we need to come together to yarn about the things that are important to us and to showcase the incredible contributions of First Nations women and lead a pathway for our next generation of women as leaders."

The four women of the panel who yarned were: Aunty Lois Peeler, a highly recognised elder and former principal of Worawa Aboriginal Girls' College; Rose Falla, a magistrate who specialises in Koori Court work (a court system that aims to structure sentences that are culturally appropriate to aboriginal offenders and in doing so reduce the likelihood of reoffending); Allira Dryden - Community Engagement officer for the First People's Assembly of Victoria; Alana Ryan - Australian History teacher at Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School.



L - R: Rose Falla, Alana Ryan, Allira Dryden, Sharon Nelson-Kelly, Aunty Lois Peeler, Narelle Umbers (Principal Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School), Sue Lees

The panel, facilitated by Zonta member - Sharon Nelson-Kelly, showcased the importance of First Nations Women in Australia - how they are often the 'aspirers' for their families, communities and society, the holders of the foundations of their culture and the communicators across societies. They clearly portrayed the work each of them was doing in their areas of expertise and interests to build a better society overall, and particularly to build a better world for indigenous women and girls.

Importantly they outlined to the audience the need for them as indigenous 'to must always walk two worlds' but also the

essential need for us as non-indigenous to do that as well and learn about their reality and laws of their culture.

The aim of the evening was for the community to see four indigenous women who were kicking 'goals', across all age groups, and realise that there are many more out in the community like these women. And of course, the important contribution these women are making to indigenous affairs. The strong audience engagement confirmed that we managed to achieve that aim, with comments afterwards including:

'Congratulations on the fabulous, informative and uplifting presentations from an inspiring panel of extraordinary women with such interesting levels and areas of experience'

'Thanks for last night. It was a great crowd. Particularly appreciated the words of a wise Aunty.'

Registration charges raised funds for the Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra to commence a Young First Nation Woman's Leadership Award in 2025, plus a donation of \$500 in 2024 for a Science Award (in recognition of the importance of STEM education for girls) at Worawa Aboriginal Girls' College.

It has also started a relationship with Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School and Worawa College.

A highlight of the evening was the engagement of the present Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar students. The students are working on reconciliation now!

Article by Sue Lees

News from previous Young Women in Leadership Award winners

Mia Salomon (2022)

Mia is studying nursing and midwifery at Deakin University with a Vice Chancellor's full scholarship for her undergraduate course. She competed 2023 at the Australian National Gymnastics Championship in Aerobics. Following stunning performances at that level she was selected to be in the team to represent Australia at the Aerobics World Championships in Pesaro, Italy 2024. Mia and her team have done very well and have secured a spot for Australia at the 2025 World Games in Chengdu, China. Mia continues with her lifesaving.

Khushi Jadhav (2020)

Khushi has just completed a combined Bachelor of Commerce and Media, majoring in Journalism at Monash. She works part-time with Apple and is currently applying for positions related to her study. Khushi is keen to join Zonta at some point.

Hannah Price (2019)

Hannah received a prestigious Tuckwell Scholarship to ANU to study Law & PPE (Politics Philosophy and Economics). In 2026 Hannah will begin her legal career, having secured a graduate position.

She continues cross-country skiing with the national cross-country ski team.



Article by Sue Lees

2024 District 23 Women Taking Climate Action Award

The Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra in collaboration with Zonta Says Now, started the Women Taking Climate Action Award in 2021. The award recognizes women making significant contributions to climate innovation, celebrates women-led climate action and aims to build valuable networks for sustainable development. The award was then established at the 2023 District 23 conference as an official district project, with the prize money of \$1,000 being supported by voluntary donations from District 23 clubs.

The award promotes Zonta's commitment to environmental issues, acknowledging the growing importance of climate action within the organization. This year's recipient, Jane Baker of Mrs Baker's Still House in Elmhurst, Victoria, exemplifies this mission. Encouraged to apply by the Zonta Club of Central Goldfields, Jane runs an all-female distillery that produces gins, liqueurs, and whiskies using sustainable, low-impact methods. Her business sources botanicals locally, operates on 100% solar power, and reflects the alignment between sustainability and economic viability.

Mrs. Baker's Still House

0418 141 685

stillhouse@mrsbakers.com.au

www.mrsbakers.com.au

@mrsbakersstillhouse

...introducing the new *Stylish & Pragmatic* dry gin (SILVER MEDAL)



Jane joins a distinguished group of past honourees, including Margaret Hender, South Australia (2021) for establishing Australia's first revolving solar fund, Emma Cutting, Victoria, (2022) for her efforts to create a Melbourne pollinator corridor and the 2023 co-winners: Alana Mountain, Victoria, who helped influence policy to end native forest logging, and Professor Anne Poelina, a Nyikina Warrwa woman, Western Australia, recognized for her extensive climate action work.

The Women Taking Climate Action Award not only raises the profile of the Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra, District 23 and Zonta Says Now but also creates meaningful connections within the climate action sphere, underscoring the role of women-led initiatives in advancing environmental sustainability.



Jane Baker and her daughters who run Mrs Baker's Still House

Article by Sue Lees

Birthing Kits with Camberwell Girls' Grammar School (April 2024)

Dr Deb Langford and Sue Lees spoke to Year 10 students at Camberwell Girls' Grammar about the importance of birthing kits. Deb had experienced having to use a birthing kit in an emergency in Nepal when she was working as a doctor in remote areas. Her experience highlighted how life-saving a birthing kit could be for mother and child – offering an opportunity for a clean birth in a difficult environment.

Sue, Deb, Julie Pincombe, Jennifer Ray, and Di Hillman returned to the school in October to help the girls assemble 200 birthing kits.



The girls and staff were great, as have been the girls and staff at Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar, the boys and staff at Xavier College. At all the schools everyone has pitched in, followed instructions, were appreciative of the support from us and saw a clear purpose in what they were doing.

We look forward to working with the schools again in 2025.

Article by Sue Lees

Radio Eastern 98.1 FM - Hello Zindagi

Veena Barsiwal, a ZCMOY club member, is involved in an Indian cultural broadcast Hello Zindagi, currently airing on 98.1 FM. Veena shared the story of what it is and how it started:

The journey started on a Multicultural Day where an Indian community representative met a Radio Eastern 98.1 Fm presenter. The concept and offer to start a whole new radio program for the wider community was well received. Over the period of next 6 months of training & practice, the idea of an Indian radio show actualised on 3 October 2024.



L to R: Veena Barsiwal, Suman Zutshi, Dilip Joshi and Ruchi Sharma

Every Thursday, at 8pm, four passionate Australian-Indians of Indian origin bring an interactive talk show in mixed English and Hindi with some great Bollywood Music. The program has lots of information to offer about Indian culture, existing community engagements, local & Victorian initiatives to keep community aware, encouraging the creativity around and bridging Indian culture with wider communities.

The team aims to bring smile on every listener's face with their hearts saying "HELLO ZINDAGI" wherein zindagi means life in Hindi so it translates to Hello Life!

The program is well received with our audience and feedback is great. The journey so far is exciting, engaging and encouraging. Moving forward, through this program, the team aims to serve our community in the most meaningful way.



L to R: Veena Barsiwal, Ruchi Sharma and Vasan Srinivasan, CEO of Mental Health Foundation Australia

Article by Veena Barsiwal

Zonta Says Now

The November Intercontinental Think Tank explored how international financial architecture impacts gender-equal climate justice.

Hosted by Zontians from Europe and Africa, they delved into the facts and figures behind the economic gender gap, analysed the economic structures that led to this situation, and discussed the consequences on women in Sweden, Germany, and Uganda.

The keynote speakers were:

- Jennie Sinclair, an entrepreneur, investor, and board member of the Swedish Ownership Foundation
- Saadat Nakyejwe Kimuli, PhD. With a PhD in Business Administration and Sustainability, she is passionate about fostering a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem in Uganda.

Jennie Sinclair stressed that women now need to move beyond setting their ambitions on senior management but rather as owners and influencers of business, to have effective power in the economy and society, nationally and globally.

Saadat spoke about the value of microloans to women in countries such as Uganda and Bangladesh and how financing women's businesses have shown to lead to improvements in the standard of living personally, for families and for the countries. Women also tended to want to develop sustainable, climate sensitive businesses.



The next Australian Think Tank meeting

Saturday 14 December 2024

4.00 pm – 5.30 in Vic/Tas/NSW/ACT

Our guest speaker will be Dr Catherine Trundle. Catherine is a medical anthropologist and ethnographer at La Trobe University and gained her PhD from Cambridge University in 2009.

Her research focuses on environmental health, including rights to a healthy environment, how inequality and social exclusion shape environments of wellbeing, and how to address the underlying systemic, political, and social barriers to creating healthy environments.

Her current research focuses on heat stress and climate justice in Australia. In asking how we might include diverse voices and perspectives to inform solutions to extreme heat, her research engages different knowledge holders, communicators, and organizers in Melbourne and Australia.

Please register today and mark the date and time in your diaries – you won't want to miss this meeting!

[Register here for the 14 December meeting.](#)

Article by Sue Lees

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence: Zonta Says No to Violence Against Women

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual global campaign which runs every year from 25 November (the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day). During the 16 Days of Activism, communities around the world join the call to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls, and Zonta Says No to Violence Against Women.



District 23, Area 1 & 4 Advocacy Report

Over the past few months the Area 1 and 4 Advocacy Group has been focusing on promoting our work for the 16 Days of Activism. Many ideas have been shared and are included in the Calendar of Events ([ZCMOY members can access it in Google Drive](#)) occurring across the State. Highlights include the Zonta Bendigo Club video on Respect for the 16 Days of Activism. The video shows members expressing their views of what respect means to them. [Watch it here](#).

Another important example is the Community Vigil being held in Wangaratta. This candlelight gathering of the community wishes to honour those who have lost their lives to family and sexual violence. It is being held on Thursday 28th November in King George V Gardens.

As we prepare for the Zonta Says No Campaign, I encourage our members to consider how each can engage with this campaign bringing together two significant issues facing women and girls today – Gender Inequality and Climate Change.

Update on other Advocacy work:

- Liaison continues with the African Women's Clinic to explore how Zonta can better support their endeavours to eliminate Female Genital Mutilation.
- Focus continues in advocacy of World Elder Abuse Day and work to include in our District 23 calendar.
- The end of Non Disclosure Agreements campaign is progressing through the Victorian Parliament currently.
- First Nations Advocacy - Congratulations were expressed by the group on Melbourne on Yarra's hosting of the First Nations event at Ivanhoe Girls Grammar recently. Fostering and building understanding is recognised as a key role we can play in building a better world for First Nations women and girls.

If you have any ideas for advocacy work the group should be undertaking then please contact Debra Maiden.

Article by Debra Maiden, Area 1 & 4 Advocacy Representative

ZCMOY Activities during 16 Days

Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra is participating in the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence in 2024 as we and our colleagues across Zonta International do annually.

This year, our group is participating in [the Walk Against Gender-Based Violence](#) in Melbourne on the 22 November 2025. The campaign then kicks off from the 25 November through to the 10 December.

The campaign will feature a variety of topics:

- Elimination of gender-based violence
- Remembrance for those who have lost their lives as a result of gender-based violence
- Red flags and language across generations
- Coercive control
- Support groups
- A dedicated series from our very own Veena dedicated to NO ABUSE.

Follow our social media posts on Instagram and Facebook to learn more.

Our campaign is informed by the support provided from:

- [Zonta International](#)
- [United Nations Women](#)
- [Respect Victoria](#)
- [Safe & Equal](#)

And many other organisations dedicated to providing support for those who have experienced gender-based violence and for advocating for means of prevention.

We encourage everyone to participate in the social media campaign through liking, commenting and sharing our posts and advocating against gender-based violence.



#noexcuse #16DaysOfActivism #zontasaysno
#endviolenceagainstwomen
#1800RESPECT
#16Days2024
#16DaysOfActivism
#ZontaSaysNO
#endgenderbasedviolence
#lovezontamelbourne

Article by Alex Meagher



Other ways you can get involved in 16 Days of Activism (non-Zonta events):

Walk Against Family Violence

- Join [Respect Victoria on Friday 22 November](#) at the Birrarung Marr.
- Join walks happening in your local areas - [check the calendar of events here](#).

Workshops, Talks

- [Money Morning Tea – financial wellbeing for women](#) (City of Boroondara)
- Cardinia Shire - [Together We Can and Myli presents this 16 days of Activism](#)
- [Start The Conversation](#) - Family violence prevention is everyone's business (webinar).

Training

- [Family Violence Prevention & Response Community Workshop](#) by GenWest
- The [Men as Allies Training](#) is a new online course that supports men to understand their role as an ally in promoting gender equality and preventing gender-based violence and disrespect.



Online course from Women's Health Victoria

Ethical Gifts Ideas

Christmas is just around the corner, why not choose to gift consciously and consider buying from social enterprises and not for profits that supports women, refugee and asylum seekers, First Nations people and the environment.



Here are some ideas:

[Asylum Seeker Resource Centre](#) - purchase an e-card for a loved one.

[For Dignity](#) - Shop Ethical Gifts, Homewares & Fashion that provide hope, dignity and freedom to women affected by exploitation

[Welcome Merchant](#) - Australian-made products by refugees

[Clothing the Gap](#) - a fresh and dynamic Community brand managed by health professionals that celebrates Aboriginal people and culture

[Green Collect](#) - ensure all items are used to their full potential, which means not just recycling materials but finding we find a way to re-use them in the community or make them into other products. This work creates jobs for people who once faced barriers to employment.

[SisterWorks](#) - grass-roots social enterprise working closely with migrant women supporting economic empowerment.

[The Torch](#) - provide art, cultural and arts industry support to First Nations people currently in, or recently released, from Victorian prisons.

[Goods for Good](#) - support, empower and employ women with lived experience of homelessness and domestic violence.

[The Social Outfit](#) - a fashion label with a difference; founded with the purpose of supporting refugee and new migrant women to kick-start their Australian careers.

[PawPo](#) - After handmade gifts made that support migrant women? Go no further than PawPo. The store sits in the town of a Nhill where 10 per cent of the population is made up of refugees from the Myanmar- Thai border.

[Made by Many Hands](#) - With each store being owned by a migrant woman, Made By Many Hands provides the infrastructure to empower female entrepreneurs to interact directly with their customers and to take ownership of their profit.

[Bush Balm](#) - social enterprise which provides free bush medicine for Indigenous dialysis patients in remote parts of Australia.

Multicultural Women's Alliance Against Family Violence (MWAAFV)

Veena Barsiwal, a ZCMOY club member, is a Treasurer with the MWAAFV and shared information about the alliance:

Together for Change: At the Multicultural Women's Alliance Against Family Violence (MWAAFV), we are a collaborative coalition committed to addressing the urgent need for culturally specific and appropriate family and domestic violence services in Victoria.

Who We Are: Our Alliance is a diverse and dynamic group comprising multicultural community leaders, service providers, academics, lawyers, and counsellors. Together, we collaborate with family violence service providers, gender equity organisations, health and legal experts, faith groups, universities, media representatives, policymakers, and all levels of government.

Our Mission: We were founded to amplify the voices of multicultural communities and advocate for:

- Increased investment in culturally and linguistically tailored services.
- Deeper understanding of the unique cultural contexts underpinning family violence in all its various forms.
- Continuous engagement with stakeholders to strengthen connections and identify actionable solutions.



MWAAFV annual event for the International Women's Day in March 2024 held at the Parliament House in Melbourne

Why We Exist: Victoria's multicultural communities face significant barriers to accessing family violence services that meet their cultural needs. By uniting our voices, we aim to break these barriers and ensure that no woman is left behind.

Our Vision for Change: Through advocacy, collaboration, and meaningful dialogue, we strive to foster:

- A stronger support system for multicultural communities.
- Real and sustainable change in the way family violence is addressed across all cultures.

We believe that together, we can pave the way for a future where every community is empowered to overcome family violence in a way that respects their cultural identity. Join us on this journey toward a safer and more inclusive Victoria because together we can create impactful solutions.

#MWAAFV #FamilyViolencePrevention #CulturalEquity #TogetherForChange

Article by Veena Barsiwal

Book Recommendation: Consumed

Written by AJA Barber, **Consumed** focuses on the fast fashion industry and the uncomfortable history of the textile industry and its links to racism, wealth inequity and slavery.

It also focuses on how the fast fashion industry is creating an environmental crisis and how we can be a voice for those women, in particular POC, who do not have the power to speak up for themselves.

Contribution by Caitlin Johns



Book Recommendation: The Will to Change

Our November speaker from Respect Victoria opened her presentation with a quote from bell hooks, African-American author, feminist, and social activist (1952-2021). The quote was from *The Will To Change: Men, Masculinity and Love* which helps men explore their emotions by addressing some of their most common concerns, which include fear of intimacy and their loss of place in the patriarchal society.

Men want and need love, but the patriarchal culture can prevent them from knowing themselves and being in touch with their feelings, which causes them to have difficulty loving. *The Will To Change* helps men be open with things like fear of intimacy and the way they have lost their patriarchal place in society.

Throughout the book, hooks explores things in new and challenging ways to get men in touch with themselves so they can reclaim the best parts, be open to love, and experience a wide variety of emotions that have usually only been experienced by females. Perhaps a useful Christmas gift for a man you know?

Contribution by Caroline Kettle

Drama Mini-Series Recommendation: Unbelievable

After a young woman is accused of lying about a rape, two female detectives investigate a spate of eerily similar attacks.

Starring, Toni Collette, Merritt Wever, Kaitlyn Dever with [Rotten Tomatoes score of 98%](#).

Contribution by Julie Pincombe

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

