



SWNNH Newsletter



Neighbourhood Houses Victoria

Issue 19

May 2024

NETWORKER DEB KING ATTENDED PORTLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES 45 YEAR CELEBRATION PG 6

VERSION 1

Casterton - Social Enterprise Op-Shop

Congratulations to Casterton Community House Inc on the recent opening of their latest venture, a community op-Shop. The Op-Shop will provide much needed to funds to community groups and activities. See the full story on page 7.



Contact Network

South West Network Neighbourhood Houses contact details –
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Hours 9.30-5.00 Mon-Thurs
9.30-3.30 Fri

Camperdown

It's been a busy time for Camperdown & District Community House, but that is now the norm rather than the exception!

Our monthly painting workshops are well attended, and a great time is had by all. It is a wonderful program that has sustained engagement with both seasoned artists and beginners for years now, and the program in 2024 is shaping up to be one of the best yet! We are so fortunate to have an extremely talented local artist who also has a breath of teaching experience, and is willing to provide her time and skills as a volunteer.



We have held our first community workshop as a part of our "Public Art and Spaces: Bringing People Together"/"The stories that pave our way" project, funded by FRRR. It was an incredibly rewarding session, with a wide range of demographics, from gardeners, artists, teachers and more! We are really capturing and representing our community through the stories that are being shared and captured in the designs we are creating from these sessions. These designs will be made into art pavers and set within the community garden hub to create an intentional community space for recreation, workshops, and just to visit and enjoy the space. We will be including a digital component to the project, where individual stories and the process of creating the art pavers will be available via QR code and a link to our website.



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We held our annual Family Fun Day during the Easter school holidays. While we did not have as large of an attendance as we had hoped for, everyone who came along had a wonderful time. We plan to run a modified program during the winter school holidays but indoors, and hope to engage the local school communities to more effect in promoting engagement.



Our Food Bank service is continuing to grow along with demand. We are liaising with South West Health's Health Promotion team and participating in their review of food security across Corangamite. The team will be launching their report on this project at Camperdown Community House in June. A great example of how working together across disciplines and services can provide more meaningful and far-reaching results.

Our Front of House volunteer team provide such an essential service, not only as community representatives and welcoming visitors and attendees, they also allow for CCH Coordinator to have more flexibility and opportunity to foster and develop stakeholder relationships and partnerships that allows CCH to fulfil our community development role in the community. Volunteering is a changing and depleting sector, and we are very fortunate to have such community minded and dedicated volunteers.

Simpson

Conversational English

It just takes one person to notice a problem and from there great ideas bloom. Primary School teacher and now volunteer, Amanda Poustie, noticed a big increase in the number of new migrant families coming into the Simpson and Timboon communities to work on dairy farms, with limited and sometimes no English skills. Her nurturing and teacher instinct kicked in and she decided -we have to support these people. In July 2023 she approached us at Simpson & District Community Centre asking if we knew of any programs or could help her set something up to support them. After researching what else was offered in the area and much discussion, our first Conversational English Workshop was held on August 31st 2023 with eight participants and two volunteers.

With English skills ranging from none to beginner and basic it was apparent more volunteers and far more structure would be needed for workshops moving forward. Amanda now leads a team with three other volunteers, facilitating workshops in Simpson that provide a social outlet, practice English speaking, reading, writing and comprehension skills and support other areas of the participants day to day lives. They have attended a CPR and Snake Bite Workshop, touched on driving skills with plans to connect some participants to 1st and 2nd Gear Driver Tuition based in Warrnambool. Plans are also underway to include Water safety around Dams, Rivers and the Ocean and Chemical Users Courses. The group has had three excursions to different local producers giving them the opportunity to meet people, practice their English speaking and reading skills and build on the feeling of support and inclusion within the community. It is also a great opportunity for these businesses to ensure they are providing a culturally inclusive service which is paramount in a high tourism area.

A partnership with Cultura, initiated by Dianne Stewart from DFFH is providing some much-needed support and funding to expand the program further within the next three months. Cultura's input will provide the volunteers with training and travel support and provide much needed resources to the program. This partnership will be officially launched on May 9th in Simpson as "Belonging: Unlocking the Potential of our Diverse Community. If you are interested in attending please phone 0355943448 for details.

Timboon evening workshops will also be commencing in May with a huge demand for this service. As the program grows and expands we will be actively seeking new volunteers to ensure the program is sustainable into the future.

With two participants passing their Permanent Residency tests we already consider the program a success and cannot wait to see where it leads.



Newsletter Deadlines

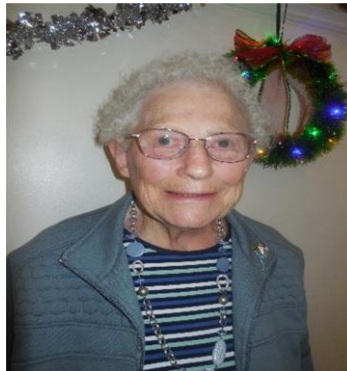
Newsletter items are to be submitted to office@simpsondcc.com.au or via hamnh@bigpond.com by the 1st May and 1st November. Phone Debbie on 55943448 if you have any queries.

Hamilton

RETIREMENT

Life member, long-time Line Dancer and HCH Inc volunteer Joan Zschech, decided to take her leave at the end of 2023 after 20+ years of involvement, to spend more family time.

Joan was awarded a Life membership in 2014 for her participation as a member of the Committee of management and commitment to the organisation. Joan is a great cook whipping up our monthly community lunches over years, leading the pre-COVID fortnightly Euchre nights with husband Laurie and an all - around contributor to house events from assisting on our site at Sheepvention, to catering for morning teas and fundraising events. We thank Joan for her commitment and company and wish both Joan and Laurie well for their future time together in retirement.



MORNING MARKET

The annual Morning Market was reintroduced following the COVID lull. Five years on and the jams, pickles, cakes, slices, second hand goods, books, and fresh produce /plants along with Devonshire teas were all back at 19 Sedgewick St. It was pleasing to see both familiar and new faces visiting on Saturday March 2. We sincerely thank all attendees and the members who baked, created, grew items for sale and purchased goods. Proceeds of approximately \$1400 was a great fundraising result, when the economics of life have changed, affecting us too.



CONTAINERS COUNT!

Hamilton Community House Inc has registered as a charity under the Victorian Container Deposit Scheme to received donations from recycling. Donations of funds or vouchers go toward supplies of non-perishable food items and toiletries, in the accessible 'Share & Care' cupboard, located in the driveway of the property. It is another way to support our community.

Warrnambool



The new team at Warrnambool Neighbourhood and Community Centre have been doing a remarkable job over the past 6 months. The Centre had been in crisis for some time, a new Manager and Reception/Admin Support staff started in September 2023 and a whole new 'green' board took up the reigns in October of the same year. It has been a steep learning curve for the whole team, and we are proud of the progress we are making. So far in 2024 we

have delivered 12 events and have an ongoing list of 9 weekly program activities across this term. In addition, we take pride in the open and welcoming, safe space we have created within the Centre and our gradual reconnection with our local community continues to grow.

Food Insecurity has become an increasing problem that bites particularly keenly in our community. Our Open Pantry allows people to drop in at any time and grab something from the shelf, this is boosted by our partnership with Saputo who supply us with 30+ litres of free milk to distribute each week. We also act as an agent for Food Share to supply more substantial food hampers for those in need. In addition, WNCC is a quarter of the way through a 'Supporting Stronger Communities' Grant project – where we have established a team of volunteers and in-kind support to make and deliver 60 school lunches per week across 3 local schools.

Our regular weekly activities included; 2 Council Run Supported Play Groups, Monday Social Sewing, Chair Yoga, Merri River Makers, Creative Makers, Needle Felting Potter in our Gardens, Cuppa Connection, FridayPlay – toddlers playgroup. Each program is supported by a volunteer coordinator.



Our staff have most fun working on our school holiday activities which have included: - 2 food adventures in "Shake-it-till-you-make-it! Ice cream and 'Marshmallow Madness' – hand made marshmallows, a 'Paper Plane Challenge' and 'Tie Die Tuesday/Wash Out Wednesday'. We also create an incredible "WoW Day" play day event each school holiday. First was "Dinosaur Discovery" in January and "Cat's Unicorns and other magic things..." in April. Next... "Luna" The 'WoW' days are a great team building activity with many hands across the community pitching in including volunteers from Are Able, the Cobden Uniting Church Op-shop and connecting with the Students and Merri River School and a host of other volunteers for our Creative Makers Activities.



Portland

When Portland Neighbourhood House (PNH) found an auspicing body at Kyeema Support Services Inc in November 2022, there were already 2 community health groups meeting monthly and 3 self-initiated social and craft groups running weekly at the PNH location, 40 Waratah Crescent, and one operating from St Stephen's Church. To begin with, the initial objective was to get in and support the needs of the members of these groups and ensure the house was fit for purpose. This culminated in the "Big Thank You Day" party on Saturday 13th of April, to celebrate and recognise forty-five years of compassionate community service by the Portland Neighbourhood House members. Around forty past and present members attended, some of whom have been part of the fabric of giving to the community for forty-five years such as the founder Barbara Kidman and her subcommittee including Margaret Groves (See photo below). Stan Aitkin who was president of the PNH up until November 2022 can be seen in the photo below, giving his speech on the day. It was Stan and the PNH Seniors Social Group that requested that PNH be inclusive of a youth cohort which has not been represented in the House for some time. PNH, through a timely partnership with the local Reengagement Centre, now has an organic, multi-generational program, responding to prior requests from Seniors in the region, for Senior's Morning Tea which has happened twice a month so far. They are looking to expand into board and card games with tech support running in the background. This interaction has encouraged some of the Seniors to become PNH volunteers with up-to-date Working with Children checks. In addition, during the April School Holidays, in response to a request from two amazingly innovative and go-getter teenagers, called Enzo and Zoren to share their Filipino culture, PNH partnered with the Glenelg Shire Youth, Portland District Health and Freeza to produce, off-site, three-day sound tech and food workshops. This culminated in an open mic and food extravaganza on Saturday 6th of April, on the Portland foreshore. These events were well attended and senior members of PNH, having read about the Youth Food and Music Fest in the PNH activities sheet, have asked for Enzo and Zoren to do a cooking demo down the track. Coming up in May, is a partnership with the Department of Justice and Community Safety Representatives to paint the interior and beautify the garden at Waratah Crescent, along with a Big Morning Tea for cancer awareness hosted by the PNH Monday/Friday Stitches coincidentally during Neighbourhood House Week.

CELEBRATING
45
YEARS OF SERVICE



Casterton

The Community Centre decided that this year we would get out there and play a more active part in the community, in the areas that we haven't before. One of the many things that we have to offer in the area is the Sandford Bush Festival. People travel far and wide to come to this little village, on the outskirts of Casterton, for some bush music, poetry, good company and lots of laughs. The festival takes place on Labour Day long weekend every year with more and more people showing up. The Centre and the local Mens Shed joined forces and set up a little stall at the festival with lots of bits and pieces for sale. Although the weather didn't play very nicely, being nearly 40 degrees both days we were there, it was a good experience.



Easter Storytime with Sharron was a special event we put on for the little people of Casterton. It was held at the local community garden. The weather was lovely and we only had a little shower of rain. We had 14 little ones come to hear some special easter stories, play some games, do some craft and then have an easter egg hunt. The kids loved it all. They made easter bunnies with fuzzy tails, played with the musical instruments, danced and sang. The best part was going on the egg hunt.



Our school holiday programme was booked out. This term the kids made minions from old tennis ball holders covered in crepe paper. The kids had fun making their own kind of minion. Then the kids made night lights. We used the same tennis ball holders, covered them in see through plastic, of various colours and put a little battery operated candle in them. We turned all the lights out, pulled down the blinds just to make sure they all worked. Then as we had some time, the kids made some keyrings. The kids had a great time and they can't wait to see what we do next term!



ANZAC Day – This year the Community Centre joined in with the community to show our respect and to remember those who have lost their lives serving in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations.

New venture – Casterton Community Centre has taken on a new venture. We have opened an Op Shop in Casterton. We already have a Vinnies in town but as the majority of little towns have more than one and everyone loves an Op shop, we decided to give it a go. The response from the locals has been amazing. The shop has been open for 2 weeks now as at 1st May and the donations are rolling in. It is run by a group of amazing, dedicated volunteers and we really could not have done this without them.



Lisa McDonald – Coordinator – Casterton Neighbourhood House & Community Centre

West Warrnambool

Our Summer School Holiday Program was again delivered at the Warrnambool West Primary School attracting loads of enthusiastic families looking for some fun and engaging activities to do during the long break. The program, facilitated mostly by volunteers ran for three days a week over a three week period. Some of the activities included kite making, mosaics, sewing, gardening, pickle ball and cooking.

In February we recommenced our Toddle on Hoddle playgroup partnership with Warrnambool West Primary School. The school supports our playgroup with provision of a school teacher who designs a weekly program based on interesting and interactive themes. Approximately 25 families attend our weekly sessions.



Our five week introduction to meditation and mindfulness attracted 12 enrolments, who under the guidance of Dh Sanghamati a Traditional Buddhist Practitioner developed techniques to increase their emotional positivity and reduce every day stress and anxiety. We are extremely grateful to Sanghamati who donates all course fees back to the house.



Weekly crafting - Crafts n Laughs continues to provide a welcoming and inclusive space for community members to come along and meet new craft enthusiasts, share ideas and work together on special projects. One of this year's projects is creating some set designs and costumes for the Primary Performers Production of The Little Mermaid.

Our Crafts n Laughs group are dedicated to using recycled materials to make up the majority of their project content. Over the last year we have formed an alliance with the local Beach Patrol 3280/3284 and have on several occasions collectively joined their beach, river and estuary clean ups, using marine litter to create various art forms. The West Warrnambool Neighbourhood House advocates for collective action and hopes that through these sustainable programs we can indirectly inform the community about environmental issues and the damaging effects of climate change.



In partnership with South West Healthcare Health Promotions Team our NH assisted in trialling some recipe cards which were developed in response to food relief recipients not having the confidence to prepare a nutritious meal from ingredients most commonly found in a Western District Food Share hamper. As a group, six participants tested the recipe cards providing valuable and constructive feedback to the health team.

To celebrate Neighbourhood House Week this year, we will be inviting our Toddle on Hoddle families to attend a special excursion to South West TAFE's brand new early years learning centre and also the Warrnambool Library. For our local school aged students we will be running a Healthy Day Out at Brauer College. In partnership with Brauer VM students we have put together a fantastic program for Warrnambool West upper primary students combining healthy cooking, sustainable art and physical activities into the program. For our older community members we will be running a linocut and printing workshop.

Happy Neighbourhood House Week to all our supportive community members in the West!

Network Members

Camperdown Community House Inc

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 Camperdown 3260
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Casterton Community Centre

31 Henty Street
 Casterton 3311
 Phone 0355812139

Hamilton Community House Inc

19 Sedgewick Street
 Hamilton 3300
 Phone 0355719780

Portland Neighbourhood House Coordination Program

Shop 7,
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 103-111 Percy Street
 Portland 3305
 Phone 0355211856

Simpson & District Community Centre Inc

11 Jayarra Street
 Simpson 3266
 Phone 0355943448

Warrnambool Neighbourhood and Community Centre Inc

17 Fleetwood Court
 Warrnambool 3280
 Phone 0355614624

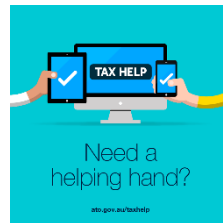
West Warrnambool Neighbourhood House

118 Timor Street
 Warrnambool 3280
 Phone 0418 944 276



Neighbourhood Houses Victoria

Services* you can find at Houses within the South West Network



WESTERN DISTRICT FOODSHARE



AUSTRALIAN MEN'S SHED ASSOCIATION
 Shoulder to Shoulder



* Services available at each house will vary so call ahead

WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE?

Neighbourhood houses are the heart of our communities. They bring people together to connect, learn and contribute to their local community through social, educational, recreational and support activities.