

THE YEARS OF OUR LIVES



People admire



my birthday



once upon a time



IS A MOST SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENT



A highlight in my life



took 4 1/2 months off



exciting



miembros grupo jardin



ABOUT THIS PROJECT



As part of the 2020 Victorian Seniors Festival re-imagined, City of Melbourne's Ageing and Inclusion team set out to deliver a community arts initiative to celebrate and showcase the unique life experiences and diversity of older Melburnians.

With their background in creative community engagement, Radical Attic (artists Alia, Brendan and Shaun) were selected to complete the concept and design of 'The Years of Our Lives' community timeline project.

Playful 'reflection packs' were translated into five languages and distributed by mail to interested members of the community. The distribution of packs was supported by local community organisations including the Salvation Army, Unison House and other key community leaders.

A submission form via Participate Melbourne was also designed for interested members of the community with access to the internet.

Participants were asked to share their reflections and treasured memories which were categorised into themes of accomplishment, adventure, change, community, hobbies and significant or influential people. Many beautifully detailed responses were received from more than twenty individuals throughout Melbourne. From here, Radical Attic curated the selection of responses contained in this book.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude and thanks to every individual and organisation who supported the development, design and delivery of 'The Years of Our Lives' community timeline project in 2020.

1930

INTRODUCTION

2020 has been a year that many of us will never forget. In the face of various challenges, we felt inspired to consider other significant, unusual or unforgettable years in the lives of our community. We proudly present the result: *The Years of Our Lives*, a community timeline project.

Contained within these pages you will discover stories of love and loss, artistry and adventure, migration, childhood, achievement ... and even teapots! Each wonderfully reflective submission was

read with care and consideration. We only wish there was more space within these pages to include them all.

Just as varied as the stories themselves, our 24 contributors reflect Melbourne's vibrant culture and diversity. Thank you to each and every individual who entrusted their memories and photos to us. We hope you enjoy reading these stories: let them take you on a journey through 'The Years of Our Lives' and our treasured City of Melbourne community.

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of country in the areas where this project took place. We pay our respects to all Elders past, present and emerging. We would also like to pay our respects to First Nations communities across Australia whose ongoing story on this land extends back tens of thousands of years.

2020

CONTRIBUTORS



AMPARO
COLLAZOS
UMBARILA

*Born in
Bogotá, Colombia*

*Moved to Melbourne
2006*



BOB
EVANS

*Born in
Albury, NSW*

*Moved to Melbourne
2001*



CATHERINE
VAN WILGENBURG

*Born in
Leicester, UK*

*Moved to Melbourne
1980*



DAINA
OZOLINS

*Born in
Swindon, UK*

*Moved to Melbourne
1969*



DIANE
NOEL

*Born in
Sydney, NSW*

*Moved to Melbourne
1980*



DIANE
MCDONALD

*Born in
St. Kilda, VIC*

CONTRIBUTORS



EDITH
NELSON

*Born in
Williamstown, VIC*



FRANCES
RUFFAUT

*Born in
Mauritius
Moved to Melbourne
1981*



IRENE
MILLAR

*Born in
Belfast, Northern Ireland
Moved to Melbourne
1981*



JANETTE
BARNETT

*Born in
Geelong, VIC*



JESSICA
MARTIN

*Born in
Ismailia, Egypt
Moved to Melbourne
1974*



JOANNA
FOWLER

*Born in
Shanghai, China
Moved to Melbourne
1990*

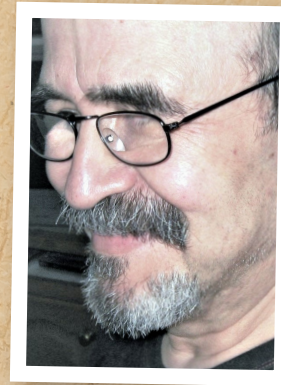
CONTRIBUTORS



JOSE ALONSO &
JULIE HARRINGTON

Born in
Cuba (Jose) and Massachusetts USA (Julie)

Moved to Melbourne
1969 (Jose) and 1970 (Julie)



KEMAL
ÖZTÜRK

Born in
Denizli, Turkey

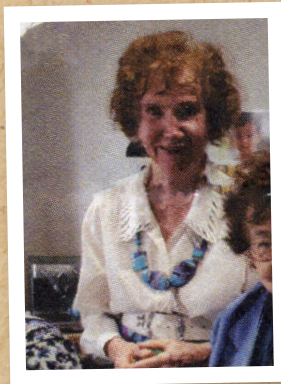
Moved to Melbourne
1989



LOURDES
BRENT

Born in
Hong Kong

Moved to Melbourne
1966



MAVIS
BARBOUR

Born in
Melbourne, VIC



NELIDA
CORNU

Born in
Formosa, Argentina

Moved to Melbourne
1970

CONTRIBUTORS



PATRICIA
HOLTON

*Born in
Fitzroy, VIC*



ROSEMARY
NOBLE

*Born in
Adelaide, SA*

*Moved to Melbourne
1971*



SONIA TAGLE
DE GUZMAN

*Born in
Santiago, Chile*

*Moved to Melbourne
1976*



WEI MIAO
HUA

*Born in
Shanghai, China*

*Moved to Melbourne
2003*



WILMA
ROSSIGNUOLO

*Born in
Melbourne, VIC*

WHAT WE LOVE ABOUT MELBOURNE

I love Melbourne because it is so easy to get to everything that I want. The Dock Library, the Hays Cinemas, the supermarket, the Chemist it's all here at Docklands where I live!

I love the freedom. People are very friendly, helpful and it is very multicultural.

The city buzz and vibrant cultural diversity

Its beautiful parks and gardens, sporting and cultural venues, events and wonderful people.

I love everything. The people, environment and the beauty of it. I have made good friends in all the places I have been working and neighbour hood. I am bless.

People, weather, culture

Multicultural mix of people from so many parts of the world

VERSATILITY.
MULTI-CULTURISM
EXCELLENT HOSPITALS
TRANSPORT
PARKLANDS
SPORTING FACILITIES
SUPERB RESTAURANTS

WHAT WE LOVE ABOUT MELBOURNE

Cominar en los parques
Variedad de comidas.
Personas amables de todas
las nacionalidades.

Muchas opciones de acti-
vidades culturales y
de todo tipo

Love to walk in the parks, variety
of food options, friendly people
of all different nationalities,
variety of cultural activities

I love the friendly people,
I love the pretty parks,
I love the lay out of the city
I love the trams.

I love my home BYE LOON HOUSE,
I love the choice of places to
visit - theatres, sciences, friends
restaurants and the food social
I love the countryside + beach nearby
I love the spiritual centres + churches

The Queen Victoria Market

I love Melbourne because
it is still the safest place in the
world, and it is so easy to
get around on the public
transport. We have great
sport facilities and
restaurants.

Theatre, Parks,
Restaurants
+ Weather
when not too cold

The weather (four seasons in
one day), the food (choice of
cuisines, world class restaurants
and fresh food), the tram, the
parks and gardens

- Botanic Gardens
- Museum
- National Gallery
- Theatres
- Manger's Xmas windows
- Zoo
- High level trams
- Beaches
- Boat Trips on YARRA.

Multicultural global perspective

I SPECIALLY LOVE THE
BEAUTIFUL GARDENS
& WATERFRONT PROMENADE
LOVELY SPACE FOR WALKING &
RELAXING . . .

COMMUNITY TIMELINE

(source: victorianplaces.com.au)



1930s-40s

Janette Barnett

I cannot believe 91 years have passed... I recall early years of swimming lessons, kicking on the ironing board across Eastern Beach pool, which was at the end of the street in East Geelong where we lived in a lovely Art Deco flat.

1930s-40s

Edith Nelson

I was the youngest in a family of four children with two sisters and a brother. We all lived in a three bedroom rented timber home. The kitchen was the hub of the home and a small scullery across the hallway had one cold water tap. We did own a refrigerator and consequently the ice man regularly delivered a fresh frozen block at least twice a week and more often in summer when soaring temperatures accelerated the thawing of the ice. Milk was delivered daily in the early hours of each morning and if awake one could hear the clop, clop, clop of the horse pulling the wagon as he travelled along his regular route.



1941

Irene Millar

The first raids in Belfast were in August 1941 and there was an underground air raid shelter where we had to take refuge - I can still remember listening to the whistling of the bombs as they were dropped. It was terrifying.

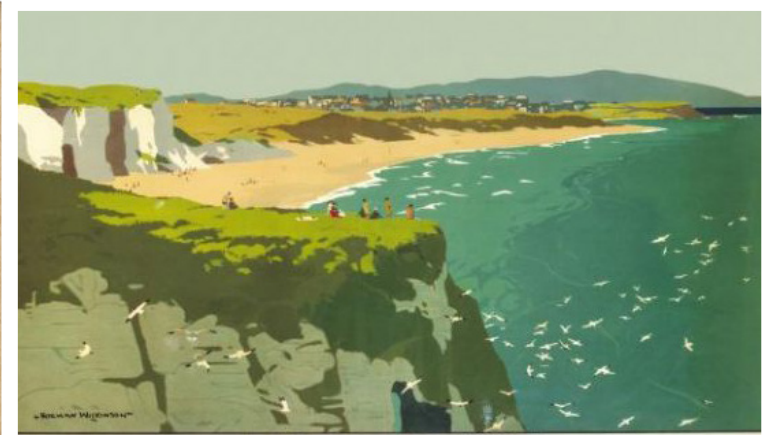
The day after the second raid we evacuated to Portrush, a beautiful seaside resort 65 miles from Belfast where most people went to spend summer holidays. We lived in a house called Seaview, a weatherboard cottage much like the Australian miner cottages. On Friday night a huge bath was filled with water boiled from the stove, where we all bathed one at a time in the middle of the room.

The dunny was outside and it had to be emptied each night after dark. Two of us had to take it to the cliffs and most nights it would be blowing a gale so you could imagine what

could happen! And there was always an argument over who was going.

Portrush has a special place in my heart and will always bring back fond memories.

When the war ended we went back to Belfast and the celebrations were something I will never forget. My brother Jack, 5 of my sisters and I walked into Belfast to the dock where everyone was celebrating, dancing, singing and hugging any serviceman in the crowd! It was a fantastic evening and we all walked home again.



PORTRUSH

NORTHERN IRELAND

By NORMAN WILKINSON R.S.

IRELAND'S PREMIER HEALTH AND HOLIDAY RESORT

ILLUSTRATED GUIDE (POST-FREE) FROM TOWN CLERK (DEPT.) PORTRUSH

(source: pinterest.com)

1942



Jessica Martin

When I was 5 years of age I went to a French-speaking Catholic convent school in Egypt where we lived. Because at that time i could not speak French - I felt solace and peace going to the school church and praying. That experience led me to my interest in prayer and various faiths. I love spirituality - all religions - and I have studied many: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Meditations...It makes me feel content with love at the helm of all activities. How we think makes all the difference in life...and I feel it's the most joyful life when understanding fills our thoughts with good. It certainly is the most special gift...the very best hobby to practice. I love the understanding of thought - and of love.

1946



Edith Nelson

September 8th, 1946 was the date I had eagerly awaited to travel from Melbourne to Perth by rail with my mother. She was to visit her mother and family whom she had not seen for 19 years since moving to Melbourne for her marriage.

Spencer Street Station was the hub for country and interstate travel, all powered by steam engines. I can almost still smell the smoke from the large engine which was to pull the carriages for our overnight journey to Adelaide. Silhouetted in the billowing smoke was a group of friends and family gathered to farewell us, and endowing us with ample sweets and chocs to sustain us across the Nullabor.

Arriving in Adelaide the following morning allowed us free time to explore the city before embarking on our second leg, boarding a different locomotive to Port Pirie. We were then able to board the Transcontinental, a beautiful luxurious train that was to be our home for the next two plus days.

The luxury was well beyond what any eight year old could imagine. The train needed to stop along the way to refill the tanks with water to generate the steam needed to power it. This allowed us the opportunity to meet and interact with Aboriginal people who had walked many miles across the desert to trade their handmade wares. I still have a kangaroo shaped from Mulga wood which I treasure.

The wonderment of the never ending desert with its vibrant red colours contrasted against the blue sky has never left me and I am still in awe of the magic it created with stunted shrubs, bushes and hills.

Kalgoorlie was a welcome stop, and it was also the birthplace of my mother and where she lived until she was 16. The next and final leg was an overnight journey to Perth. Compared to the Trans Continental this was quite a bumpy ride.

The arrival at Perth station was tumultuous as the entire family was there to welcome us.

1947

Pat Holton

In 1947, my mother, brother, sister and myself were left homeless. We lived before then in a quaint weatherboard house in North Carlton, but the less-than-honourable owner suddenly wanted the house for his daughter. Subsequently, we were kicked out.

My mother had separated from our father some years earlier so we were really on our own. We had the options of living at either our grandmother's home, or our great-grandmothers. However, my mother was an independent and fastidious woman and was not able to live in someone else's home.

Because of the housing shortage after the war, the government had little to offer homeless families except abandoned army housing. We first had a brief stay at Fisherman's Bend, a place of unlined tin

sheds. I imagine such lodgings were very unhealthy, but we survived by finding the humour in it. There were no cooking facilities in the huts and one had to cook in the community cooking hut. My mother was scared of the rough women in that hut, so I became the family cook. The tough ones don't worry me and it was warm in the cookhouse - a quality not to be undervalued when living in those huts without heating.

My mother was so disgusted by the appalling conditions that she contacted The Sun and the politicians of the day. I remember Mr Cain Senior [34th Premier of Victoria] and his colleagues interviewing Mum. We hit the headlines with a picture of Mr Cain and Co. They agreed that whilst the conditions might have been good enough for soldiers, they were certainly not good enough for families. Needless to say we were out of there the next day.

But once again we were out of the frying pan and into the fire. We were placed at Camp Pell - in another unlined hut and close to the tram lines that still run through the park near the Zoo. We could hear the lions and tigers growling through the night. The only attribute was that since we were near the city our grandmothers were able to bring good food to us. There was to be no more pushing and shoving in the cookhouse.

Because I was only 12 or 13 years old, the conditions didn't seem so bad to me...It was like living in the country, if you walked away from the camp area. And of a night time the lights of Flemington were beautiful. But my dear Mum must have had a torrid time. She worked at the Dunlop factory in Port Melbourne at the time, weighing tennis balls. They were white then.

Sometimes I think back to Camp Pell and in a way I am grateful. It was one of those trials of life that teach you coping skills. I have no stigma about living there. Many people I have met are quite shocked that I lived there. But really there is nothing to be ashamed of; it was just a sign of the times, and they were hard times, believe me.



Pat Holton at Camp Pell Housing, 1947



1960

Rosemary Noble

My mother began teaching me how to knit and sew when I was quite a young child, so I was making my own clothes by the time I went to high school. As the years rolled on I gradually added new crafts to my repertoire, taking up embroidery and macrame while at college, then later needlepoint, crochet, applique and more adventurous dressmaking.

These hobbies have never left me and I always have at least one or two books on the go, a needlepoint cushion to complete, or an appliqued quilt to finish. They are what I turn to when i am feeling reflective and will always turn my mood around.

1960

Diane Noel

I met my good friend at Business College in Sydney 60 years ago. I had not seen her for about 20 years as she had been living in Singapore and then Switzerland due to her husband's work. On my first overseas trip, at 50 years of age, I was in Switzerland which provided an opportunity to meet. I was to catch the train from Lucerne to Zurich. But oh no! I caught the wrong train. This was before mobile phones and I could not let her know – was I going to miss her? Fortunately she thought I had probably missed the train and waited for the next one. It was as though we had only seen one another a few days ago instead of 20 years.

Diane's friend as a bridesmaid (right)

Life comes full circle and she now lives on the Mornington Peninsula and we can see one another regularly. We have the history of having known one another's parents and siblings and been observers of each other's journeys of life. Whatever it was that sparked our friendship as young girls it is still there and I am most grateful.

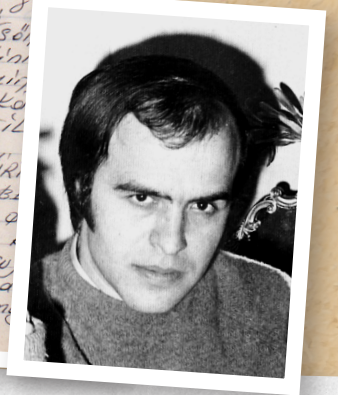
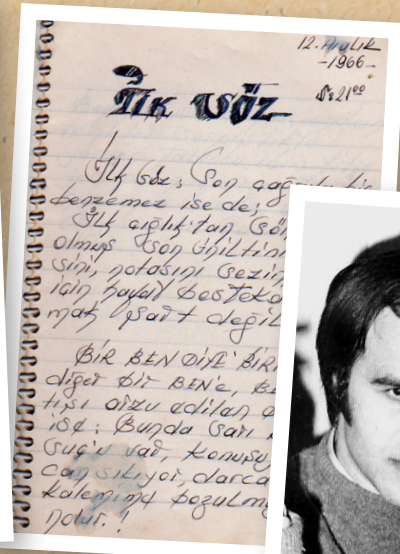


1966

Kemal Öztürk

After 24 months of compulsory military service I moved from Izmir to the capital city of Turkey, Ankara. I was working at the Ministry of Public Works and one day when I was having lunch I met a group of women office workers. One of the girls was following my conversation and smiling at me. We started to regularly have lunch with her friends at the same table.

One Saturday night, I started to write my life story. In two days, I wrote 99 small pages in one green notebook and by the last line I was proposing marriage! I decided to get married.... but how? I hadn't even talked with her personally at this point.



One week later, I wrote a love card and posted it to her work address. The card had a picture of Mickey Mouse and the words "Do you know how much I love you?" on the cover. When you opened the card, under Mickey Mouse's arms it said "This much", signed Anonymous. I stated in my note that I will wait at the Magnolia coffee bar at 5.30 pm on Friday (two days later).

I waited for her at the coffee bar near the small lemon tree. Just before 6pm, she arrived with a big smile. My hands were shaking. I tried to smile at her. I said "I'm sorry, I like surprises."

She brought my love card with her and said, "I know, I had a feeling that the person who wrote the card was you!" We walked together towards the bus stop, and just before she entered the bus, I gave her my green story notebook and yellow pen. She refused to take the pen and said, "I don't take gifts from people I don't know .. but I will read your story."

Following on from that day, we enjoyed each other's company in a small burger bar just around the corner from the office. We exchanged stories, thoughts, hobbies and had lots of laughs together. We fell in love with one another.

On the next religious public holiday, I travelled to Izmir by train, with the objective of getting permission from my father to marry her. My father resisted, but my mother said "Follow your sense and heart, good luck son" I showed her a picture and my mother kissed her picture. Then I left Izmir with my mother's blessings.

Three months later we organised a small wedding ceremony at the council hall with friends and some family members.



1966



Lourdes Brent

1966 was a very difficult year for me, one that completely changed the course of my life. My mother had organised for my older sister to complete her high school education at Methodist Ladies College in Kew. However, my sister refused to go at the last minute, so my mother substituted me instead. At that time I was a timid Hong Kong teenager who had just completed Form 4 (year 10) in an Anglo-Chinese school. I had no knowledge of Australia or even where it was.

I left in early February thinking this is just like a school excursion. I had to survive motion sickness most of the way, an unexpected overnight stop in Manila, and navigating the transit in Sydney Airport which did not have a Departure board in the 60s, before reaching Melbourne three days later.

It had been arranged for me to board with an elderly couple in Balwyn. Upon arrival the lady inquired if I had had my tea, by which I thought she meant a cup of tea. I answered yes, without realising 'tea' in 1960s Australia was dinner. So, I had a very hungry first night.

The first days of school were total confusion due to the fact that the school was huge (15 acres) with 2000 students and a very different class arrangement to what I was used to.

On my second day of school there was a tram strike in the afternoon. The temperature was 38 degrees and I had to walk from Kew to Balwyn, carrying a heavy school bag in full school uniform of hat, jacket, gloves and thick socks. I did not know I could have left them in a school locker.



*Opposite page: Lourdes as a young woman
Left: Methodist Ladies College field photo
Right: Lourdes (second from right) outside
of Methodist Ladies College, Kew*

1969

Janette Barnett

My husband was seconded to London where I answered an advert in the *London Times* saying "swap luxury apartment in Paris for same in London". Those three weeks in spring in Paris were unforgettable! Looking from an upstairs window in the evening to the street below...a lady of the night stood under a lamp, like something from a movie...during the day buying lunch from a patisserie...sitting in Tuileries Gardens whilst children sailed a yacht in the pond...



(source: <https://www.timeout.com/paris/en/arts-culture/colour-vintage-photos-of-paris>)

1970

Nelida Cornu

In 1970 I moved to Australia from Argentina. I am so much happier in Australia. I have had many opportunities arise including travelling, owning my own business and raising my 2 children.



Diane McDonald

As an 18 year old I was fortunate to join a group of young people who were actively engaged in working together to try to create a just world in which everyone had the chance to reach their potential. Before long I was invited to become a youth worker in this organisation known as the YCW. The focus of our approach was to SEE (discover) issues of injustice, JUDGE (discuss, explore, determine) what action might be required to address the problem, and ACT together with others who were affected by the injustice to bring about positive change.

1970

Julie Harrington

My husband and I had been living in Sydney for a couple of years, when we decided to move to Victoria for his new job in South Melbourne. As I was finishing up my job prior to joining him, we spoke regularly by phone about his progress in house hunting.

One evening he reported excitedly, "I've found the perfect place! It'll be a surprise. Can you come down this weekend to have a look?" Of course I could, and a few days later he met me at Essendon Airport and drove directly to the beautiful Botanic Gardens for a stroll.

"This will be our front garden!"

"But where is the house?" I enquired.

"We'll get there very soon," he replied, "but first I have to show you our back garden," whereupon we drove to Fawkner Park and another amble.

"And the house?" I reminded him.

"Nearly there now!" he responded gleefully.

My curiosity had increased enormously by the time we finally arrived at the 'house', in reality a derelict former 19th century bakery, a genuine 'renovator's opportunity'. It was a surprise all right, just as he had promised! However, the location was magnificent, the price was right and we bought the place.

It was an interesting street. On one side was a former family hotel, with the sign still visible on the wall; on the other side was a dwelling that had been a butcher's shop. Across the way there was the Austrian grocery, earlier a chemist...altogether an appealingly diverse neighbourhood.

And that, dear reader, is how we came to purchase an infinite sink for time, money and effort - and so many marvellous moments - over the ensuing years.



Jose Alonso

For many of us arriving in Australia fifty years ago, buying a house and renovating it was a common practice. It sounded easy until we realised the enormity of the task, compounded with a three year old child and a large Labrador-cross dog, Caroline. Piece of cake!

Towards the end of painting the kitchen ceiling, I decided to treat myself with my grandmother's 'Nectar of the Gods' or dulce de leche (milk sweet). This famous dish consists of boiling an unopened tin of sweetened condensed milk in plenty of water for about an hour, always making sure that the tin doesn't boil dry.

Unfortunately, in anticipation of my ultimate culinary reward, I forgot to check the water level and the tin blew up spectacularly, decorating the freshly painted ceiling with specks of solidified condensed milk. Disaster!

My little son shouted, "Dad, let Caroline clean the ceiling!" I hoisted her to my shoulder to do her best. She eagerly licked up the dulce de leche and then lay down to digest my treat. Minutes later, she emitted the loudest burp we had ever heard.

Moral of the story: An unwatched tin boils dry!

Above left: Julie and Jose's 'renovator's opportunity'.

Right: Julie and Jose with their dog Caroline



1973

Rosemary Noble

I met the man who was to become my partner not long after moving to Victoria. Our relationship lasted for around twenty years and it was only after we had parted ways that I realised what a profound influence he had on my life and the things I value.

David's love of the country and the natural world was evident. He was a dedicated native plant lover and we often spent weekends and holidays walking through bushland looking for rare plants or identifying birds and other animals by their calls and tracks.

In spite of the fact that i am a committed city dweller, I love to get out into the countryside and enjoy the many and varied landscapes that make up Australia. I have David to thank for awakening my appreciation of our natural world and an intense interest in environmental and sustainability issues.





*Sonia and her 3 boys, used
for a passport photo*

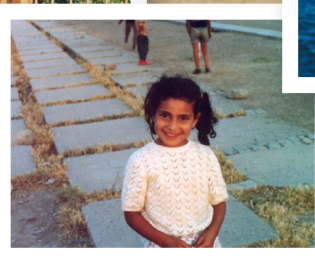
1976

Sonia Tagle de Guzman

We moved to Australia from Chile on the 22nd of May 1976: my husband and me, our daughter, and three sons - two teenagers and two younger children. On 11 September 1973 the Chilean government was taken by the military forces and my husband was sent to a concentration camp up the north of the country and was away from the family for nine months. My brother-in-law got a job for me in a big company distributing goods, in the Kardex offices.

When my husband was exonerated and sent home, he could not find work because we were still with a military government. We had to decide what to do and the obvious was emigration. We sent applications to the Australian and Canadian consulates. We were accepted by both - but Australia was first.

1970s



Kemal Öztürk

My biggest hobby is photography. It started when we came to Australia in the 1970's. Firstly, I bought a small Kodak camera and color film. Then a Nikon F1. My main subjects were my family; my wife, my kids, and my mother who came to Australia after my father passed away. I used our bathroom for my darkroom. From portrait photography to landscape took me a while to learn.

Then we moved from Sydney to Melbourne. We loved Melbourne and there were more places to discover and take more photos. Especially street photos, action photos, community photos. I now have more than half a million photos.

I went five times to Turkey. My son and I visited historical ruins and cities and I took over 100,000 photos. I took my best photos from Istanbul to Izmir. Some of those photos were exhibited at a Melbourne gallery.

1976

Lourdes Brent

In 1976, my husband and I got a group of friends together to share his love for Australian wines, over dinner at home or local restaurants. This soon became more regular and included pre-dinner badminton (to work up the appetite!), visits to wine regions, and selecting wine for cellaring. In 1989, we incorporated the group as the Victorian Wine Appreciation Society (VWAS) to facilitate bulk purchasing of wine and to get invitations to trade shows.

The group meet every Wednesday evening. They each bring a masked bottle of wine for tasting during dinner. Each wine is rated and tasted to identify its origin, grape-type, vintage and the winemaker.

For special occasions, all would bring their "cellar-best" bottle to share. So far, the group has met 1,826 times over the last four decades and consumed 8,450 bottles of wine all duly recorded.

Getting together with life-long friends to share the enjoyment of food and wines on a regular basis helps release stress from work and life. The benefit is obvious in the statistics - whilst 1 in 3 marriages in Australia end in divorce, all of the group have remained happily married with no divorces in four decades!



**VWAS @ Coonawarra
Cabernet Celebration**

1976

Irene Millar

My son surprised me by taking me to the Bridge Hotel in Richmond where a jazz band was playing - because he knew New Orleans jazz was my favourite! Back then every Sunday was the spread eagle jazz day. Unfortunately these venues don't have bands anymore so I have been attending Jazz Festivals and conventions ever since.

I went to the Port Fairy Jazz Festival in 2019 with some of my jazz friends most of whom I've known for over 40 years or more. I have been going to jazz at the Clyde Hotel in Carlton every Sunday for 12 years.

1977



Kemal Öztürk

I was one of the founding members of the Sydney Turkish Labourer's League, and became Secretary of the management committee between 1977 – 1985. We engaged the community to support working migrants, and one key gap which came up time and time again was the need for childcare for working families.

During this time, we collaborated with both Turkish and Kurdish people around the Auburn area to establish a child care centre that would support the cultural diversity of the area. But to set up a co-op childcare required significant support and funding. We conducted numerous fund-raising activities and one of my proud moments during the fund-raising campaign was directing a famous Turkish writer's play called "Aladagli Musa". After a number of sell out sessions in Sydney, we were commissioned to also perform for the Melbourne community.

After securing the initial funds we located an old house, 44 Susan Street in the late 70's, and planned and carried out an extensive renovation to establish the childcare centre. The centre is still open today and most of the directors are of Turkish and Kurdish heritage.

1978

Catherine van Wilgenburg

I studied at South Australian School of Art, finding my creative thread in working through materials to understanding my migrant journey to becoming Australian; addressing my colonial baggage and digging deep into a truer Australian history. In 1980 I moved to Melbourne to take up a position with the Ministry for the Arts as artists costume designer for the International Year of the Disabled. This led to roles as an Artist in Community Residence at Gronn Place and Barkly St Housing Commission, then a trainer in the Artists in Community Training Program.



Clockwise from top:
SA School of Art Class of 1976 (Catherine is in the back row third from the right); Catherine in 1978 at art school; 'The Choices We Were Given' collage 1978; 'All Queens and Princesses' collage 1978



Left: portrait of Bruce Pascoe by Catherine, acrylic paint and traditional spirit stain on Gray Box bark



Right: 'Eastern Barred Bandicoot/Marsupial Masterpieces' Ecoartwork

This training and teaching set the bar for starting my independent arts and architecture business Living Colour Studio Pty Ltd with my Architect partner Hans Wilgenburg. Working with people to light their spark of individual creativity is the most exciting and rewarding thing I do; supporting people to make meaning in their lives by making things from inner necessity, not external demand. Collaboration generates creative communities where people connect from their minds and hearts not their capacity to consume. Working with other artists in programs which maintain and preserve local environments engenders confidence in a sustainable future for our future generations.



1981 & 1984



Nelida Cornu

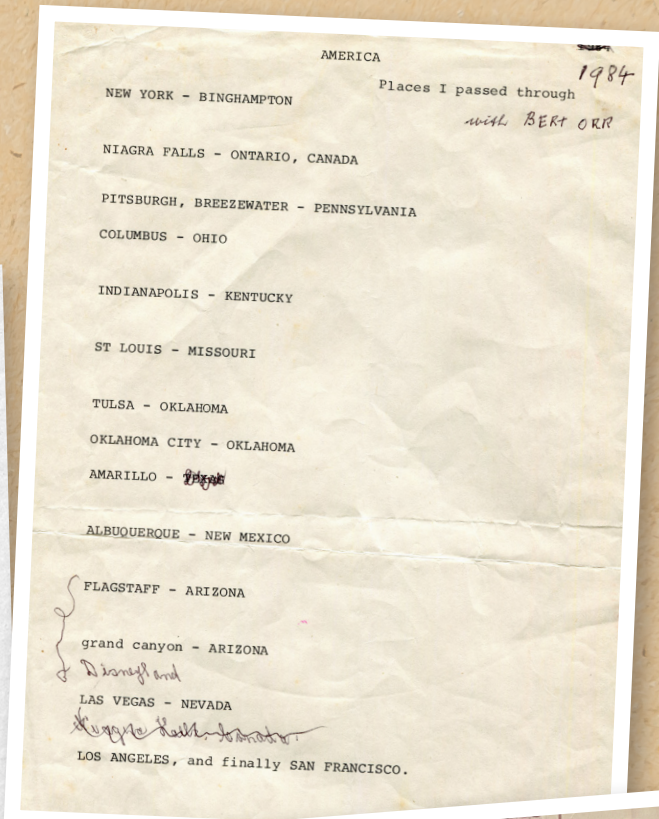
The years my children were born. I couldn't explain how much my life changed. I had been waiting nearly 11 years before my beautiful daughter was born. I felt so blessed.

1984

Mavis Barbour

I took 4 ½ months of my long service to travel with Bert Orr who I met at St Kilda Town Hall. He bought a Datsun car but he had poor eyesight, so he left the car permanently at my place, and I became his driver (for 14 years!). He liked theatre, movies, ballet, horse racing and live shows so it was great.

On that trip, we went to Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. Then by the ship Queen Elizabeth 2 to New York. There we travelled throughout America including Niagara Falls, St Louis, and the Grand Canyon.



1984

Sonia Tagle de Guzman

Brigitte. How to describe her? ... I could say: She was tiny, her beautiful black eyes were smiling before her mouth, and her long hair was caught in a pony-tail tide.

I remember her running to me and holding me, always ready to be cuddled, always ready to love, so easy to be loved.

One day my daughter rang me up. It was such a joy to receive her telephone calls because I was not only able to talk to her but also to my little grandchildren Pablo and Brigitte. But that day was different ... there I was, the telephone in my hand, no sound in my mouth, my head exploding, and it was as if all of a sudden the world stopped.

That couldn't happen to us. Only one sound in my mind "Cancer", that horrible word. No, that couldn't be true, not to a girl only three years old!

How can I describe the agony during the time after, visiting her in the hospital, flying from Melbourne to Sydney where they lived, the hope in her recuperation, the suffering, the pain.

She never lost the smile, she never stopped singing and playing, until she was too weak to do so.

Brigitte died at the age of five years old. Her short life left us in the sweetness and the richness of the moments that we share with her.





1985

Bob Evans

I'd been working for the Nimrod Theatre Company for about three years as the theatre's public relations manager. The company was losing its way. It had moved from its second home in a converted salt and sauce factory in Belvoir Street Surrey Hills, to a soul-less venue on the edge of Sydney University. Feeling unmotivated and uninspired, I resigned.

I did a ring-around of arts editors, journalists and colleagues to break the news. Over a beer with the Arts Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald I suggested that I could contribute stories on writers and actors similar to other freelance writers. Instead of taking up my offer, she countered with the news that the paper's second theatre reviewer had resigned suddenly and invited me to audition for the job. I accepted the challenge, passed the audition and wrote reviews and articles for 10 years, ultimately becoming the paper's senior theatre reviewer.

1988/89

是 (Shi) - (yi) 个 (ge) wai guo ren
I replied 是 (Shi) 不 (bu) 是 (shi)
wai guo ren wo jiu shi ying guo ren

Daina Ozolins

I finally escaped to go travelling, which I had wanted to do for ages, definitely since 1979. In the meantime I'd learned to speak Chinese.

When I was in Tianjin (天津市) I went for a walk with my guide, a Chinese man, around some local streets (a non-tourist area). A crowd was gathered watching something. We stopped and watched also. The crowd started looking at me, whispering to each other "it's a foreigner!" Just then we walked off, me saying in fluent Mandarin, "I'm not foreign I'm an English!"

There was a twitter of laughter and confusion reigned supreme as I had not conversed with my guide but I still replied in fluent Mandarin. Gotcha - they weren't expecting that!

I also visited Hong Kong which was amazing. I only went there because I knew some people - I went for three days and stayed three months. That time included working in a Japanese department store pretending to be Canadian. It was fun (including trying to learn Cantonese). I'm sad that I have not been able to reconnect or move there - I felt alive being overseas!



**Mavis with RENEGADES
composer Rose Turtle Ertler**

1990

Mavis Barbour

When I retired I took up ballroom dancing (New Vogue) and met so many people over the years. Sometimes I went to evening dances but mainly afternoon dances. So I always had somewhere to go and dancing was really exercising happily to music, for me. I am still a dancer, I dance once a fortnight at Southport Retired Persons Group Inc.

Then in 2014 At the age of 84 I was invited to join a group of retirees who were doing a Seniors Week play called RENEGADES. I did a foxtrot to the music "Exhibition Swing".

1990

Daina Ozolins

Once upon a time, a long long time ago, I was a fully fledged mechanical engineer with many talents...latent heat stored inside... Out of the blue from Queensland came a call from Queensland Railways. John Lane said they needed engineers and I needed a job so I went there and met him & he said I could have a job! So I took it!

I didn't know that most engineers did not like women engineers, and I didn't know how I was going to fit in...but somehow he found the perfect place for me to move, where being female was more allowed, not with aircon but with Neville Smith and a small compact group! And so I became a female mechanical engineer and moved to Townsville.

Whilst I was working for the railway I took plenty of photos, especially as the Ipswich Workshops were to be closed... I documented various procedures including the overhaul of the 2600's diesel engines in Redbank.





1994

Joanna Fowler

This was the year I took up golf and tennis with my husband. These hobbies keep me healthy and have improved my confidence. I find golf very skilful and challenging. Tennis is faster and needs quick thinking. I have met a lot of local people and made new friends playing these sports.

MID-1990s

Diane Noel

I started collecting teapots and now have a collection of seventy in many categories (Australian, overseas, eastern influence, novelty), shapes and sizes. The majority have been collected on travels with my husband, Richard, both overseas and in Australia. In the beginning I collected what I liked but, with so many to display and limited space, I have documented them and now only purchase to fill gaps in categories. A few years ago a small selection were displayed at the East Melbourne Library. It is also fun to select which one I will use when having visitors. Collecting teapots has also expanded to knitting fun tea cosies for both myself and friends. When stopping at Australian country towns it is a wonderful opportunity to explore Op Shops, Collectables and Antique stores as you'll never know what a wonderful teapot you will discover.



1995



Joanna Fowler

In 1995 I became an Australian Citizen. Before I got this life was not as easy. With this I feel Australian. I feel more than happy.

Diane Noel

How would you feel about going to Delhi in India with Automotive Training Australia to conduct 4 x 1 week workshops in Frontline Management for Engineers? I had been with Swinburne University TAFE working with industry for a few years delivering this program so my response was "Yes". What an interesting and enjoyable experience it turned out to be. Their supervision and management challenges were the same as those experienced in Australia. The participants all spoke and could read and write English but had different dialects depending on what part of India they came from. It was interesting hearing them convert to their mother tongue when discussion got heated. I would love to know how their careers progressed.

While I was in Delhi, my daughter sent me a fax for my birthday. 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY MUM' was all it said, so the office staff could not help but know it was a special day for me. That afternoon they presented me with a beautiful traditional outfit that, if I breathe in a little I can still fit into.

Left: Diane's students on a chai break
Right: Diane wearing the outfit, with an ATA rep



1997



Bob Evans

In April 1997 I met my partner Marisa. Marisa is a celebrated cook with an expansive knowledge of ingredients and an instinctive sense of flavours that contrast and complement, and who cooks not so much by the book but by look and feel and smell. She is the author of two cookbooks. One she is particularly proud of is titled Sicilian Seafood Cooking and the memory I distinctly recall is of us taking photos around Sicily for the book. One morning, we visited a small beachside town called Mondello, not far from Palermo, and saw this row of small fishing boats moored to a pier. It was the perfect photo for the book. It became the cover. She is imaginative and inquisitive. A generous, caring considerate friend.

1999

Edith Nelson

As with all travel, it is not necessarily the destination, but the people you meet along the way.

My husband and I were cruising along the Rhine River and stopping along the way allowed us time to venture ashore and explore townships for a few hours. We were in a small town in Germany browsing in a shop when the store owner recognised our 'Aussie' accents and asked if we had time to speak with his elderly mother.

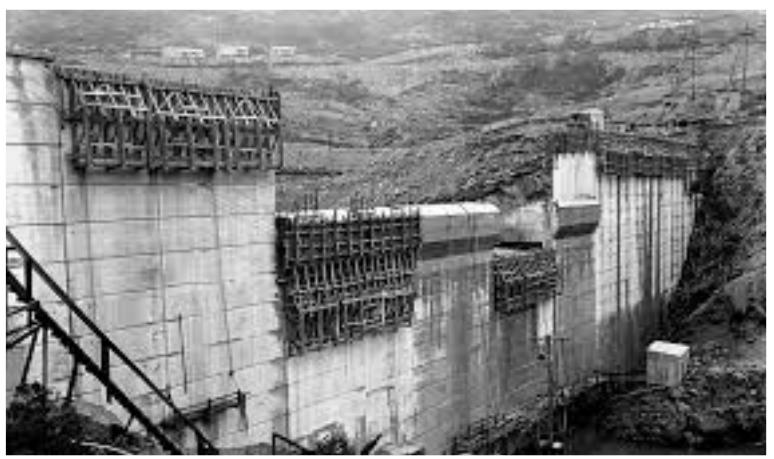
His mother eagerly told us of her interest and connection to Australia. In the late 1940s/early 50s she and her husband travelled to Australia with assurance of work at the Snowy Mountains project. She was only 19 years old when her husband left for the mountains leaving her alone in Melbourne with just a few pounds to

support her until she found work. She approached a small hotel in Flinders Street but was reluctant to let anyone know that she was German, as wounds were still fresh after WW2. The innkeeper sensed her plight and offered her a job with a small wage and a room to live upstairs.

Her husband was obligated to work on the Snowy for two years as migrants at that time were all employees in government jobs. It was quite ironic that only one month previous my husband and I had visited the Snowy Mountains. We had no idea of the magnitude and sheer brilliance of the project. It was built by people from all over the world, attracting skilled tradesmen, labourers and many Australians.

Upon returning to Australia, I mailed a book to the lady which I had purchased at the gift shop of the Snowy Project. The return mail confirmed that she had discovered photos of her husband within the book which gave her much pleasure. We exchanged letters and gifts for some time until we heard that she had died.

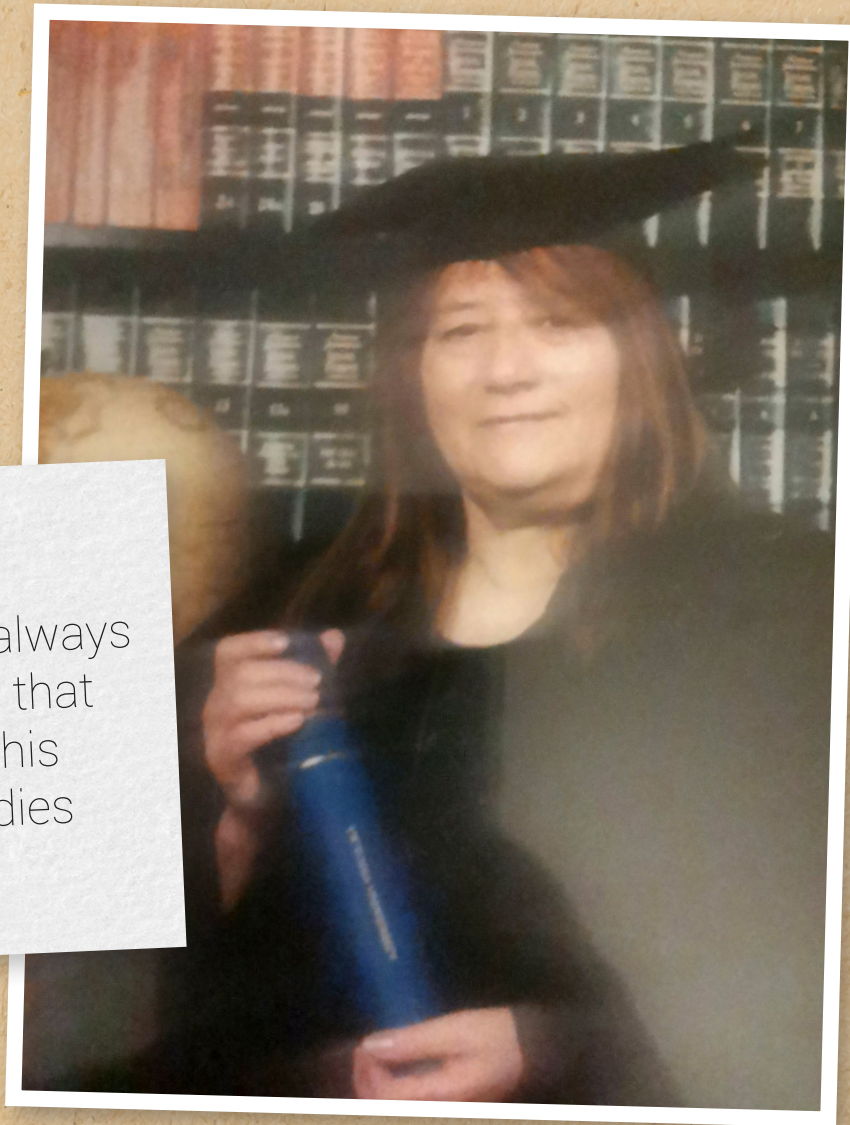
Adventure can be found in unusual places with unexpected meetings that leave an impact with one for life.



(source: smh.com.au)

Nelida Cornu

Since I was young my parents always used to say how caring I was and that led me to a career in aged care. This was the year I completed my studies and started working.



2000s

2001

Jessica at Como Gardens
Como House
a few years prior
to 2019!
when I was getting
near my marriage date
in 2001, approx.



Jessica Martin

It is a most special accomplishment that I waited for over 20 years to be married here in Melbourne. My husband to be was living in England - I lived in Melbourne and so to be married after waiting so long was truly so blessed and wonderful.

In the interval of time, we only saw each other occasionally for a short time - we wrote letters and cards so often - we also sent tapes by mail. We spoke on the telephone which was ever so expensive in those 'Past Days' - however we were very patient.

My husband was worth waiting for. A beautiful blessing for myself and my children. We all loved him so dearly for his beautiful qualities.

2002

Catherine van Wilgenburg

At 54 my husband Hans and I adopted Mantu Budhadev from Basundhara Orphanage in Odisha, India. He was abandoned at birth and had been in one orphanage before being taken to Basundhara. Through Mantu Michael we now understand the deep characteristics of trauma, recognise how they play out in people's lives and have undertaken many therapies over the years, supporting Michael to grow into the magnificent human being he now is at 25! It has been a rollercoaster of language difficulties, sensory integration disorder, behavioural difficulties throughout school, identity complexities but we have had support to find ways to sense into his dilemmas and build pathways to his self esteem and self direction. Michael Mantu is now living independently with an intellectual disability in his own flat in North Carlton, working towards following his passion to become a sports coach for people with a disability.



© 2002
main
Van Wil
with
Catherine
Hans as
a
arrived
child: 10
org
Pic

2003



Wei Miao Hua

2003年3月我来了墨尔本不久找到了教中文的学校叫高年级的语文课。这些学生活泼可爱思维敏捷，但他们感到学习中文很难，于是我因材施教，有的放矢，改变教学方法，使学生较快地掌握语文知识。平时我还参加社区活动、合唱团、有时候去募捐活动献给慈善机构，还去养老院演出，送快乐给孤寡老人。节日里我们还去社区演出增加节日气氛。我仅仅做了一些微不足道的事情。我觉得人生应该有点价值贡献给社会。这些都是应该做的，与国家和政府对我们人民关怀和照顾是不可比拟的。我还要在有生之年为社会做最大努力。

Not long after I came to Melbourne in March of 2003, I found an opportunity to teach senior Chinese at a Chinese language school. The students were lovely and clever. When they said they found studying Chinese difficult, I adjusted my methods to target their difficulties according to their needs and circumstances, and eventually helped them to improve.

I also participate in community activities, like a community choir. Sometimes we raise money for philanthropic organisations. We also perform at nursing homes, bringing some festivity to older adults there. But what I've done for the community is hardly worth mentioning. I think that it is a person's responsibility to do things for the community. What I've done for the community is no comparison to what the state and government have done for us. I will continue to make efforts to help in society.

2008



**Left: Wilma at the Melbourne Star, Docklands
Right: Wilma with her daughter in Norfolk Island**



Wilma Rossignuolo

My biggest change was leaving the farm in Nungurner, East Gippsland where I farmed with my husband Frank for 55 years. After his passing, I sold up and moved to Docklands to a lovely apartment. My daughter and son-in-law live in the same building. It was a big change but I do love it. I am on the 27th floor and the view over the bay with the boats, Albert Park Lake and the forever changing freeway traffic keeps it interesting.

2008

Joanna Fowler

In 2008 I began dancing with the Chinese Performing Arts Development. In 2013 I was asked to manage a dance group - this group started with 7 regular participants and now we have around 80 members. We meet twice a week and different volunteer instructors teach exercises and dances. Members are women mainly over 55 years old, and members of the public are also welcome to join in. We regularly perform in significant cultural events such as Chinese New Year, Melbourne Cup and in 2017 we took part in the Asian Festival performing at the Arts Centre Stage. Through dancing we keep healthy and young at heart. It is also an opportunity to meet a broad range of people and share Chinese Culture. Our group allows for relaxed and social connectivity for some, while for others an opportunity to take their skills and learning to a very high standard in performances.



2010

2010

*Places I framed
show with
with ROY FREEMAN.*

6 WEEKS OF HAPPINESS

MELBOURNE TO SYDNEY TO SINGAPORE
STOPPING AT MIRAMAR HOTEL

SYDNEY TO LONDON

THEN DUBLIN STAYING AT CASSIDY HOTEL

LONDON TO PARIS CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT
VILLA FENELON

PARIS GARE NORD RAILWAY STATION

LONDON PANCRAS STATION TRAIN UNDER ENGLISH CHANNEL

NEW YORK TO L.A STAYING AT ROSSEVELT HOTEL

L.A UNION STATION AMTRAR TRAIN CALIFORNIA COAST RIDE

TO PASO ROBLES TO SAN FRANCISCO

SAN FRAN TO EUGENE

THEN ENDING AT LAS VEGAS

VISITED MOULIN ROUGE, *(dinner) show*

CENTRAL PARK

TIMES SQUARE

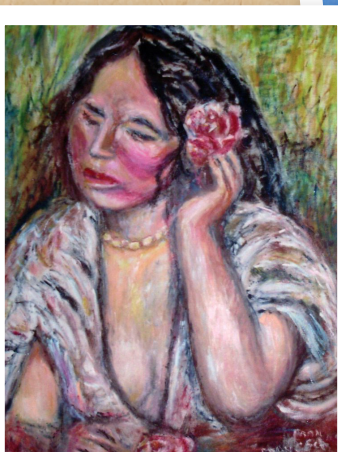
ROCKERFELLAR CENTRE

PIER 39 and 41, SAN FRANCISCO. *Weather.*

Mavis Barbour

When I was 80, I went with Roy (who was 82) overseas for six weeks. We went to the new casino in Singapore (all round and gold coloured inside), Ireland, France, America and England. We arrived back to go to the Grand Final and the Magpies won. I had met Roy two years before at a dance at the RSL in Prahran. We both liked being out and about. We took many trips as he had family in many places, sharing the driving to visit them. Roy played golf and I went along too and had a hit with a putter. Roy was a member of the Melbourne Cricket Club so when the Magpies were playing we went and sat in the long room and sometimes had a meal upstairs.





2011

Francess Raffaut

In 2011 I joined the Melrose Art Group and it offered me a nice space to do some painting, which is one of my favourite pastimes. I also enjoy the company of the friendly and diverse nationalities of the group, which creates a pleasant easygoing atmosphere. It's nice to be among those who share the same love of painting and I look forward to attending every week.

2012

Amparo Collazos Umbarila

A mis 65 años después de divorciarme, decidí realizar mi "bucket list" y viajé sola por Europa oriental y algunos países de Asia. Sobrevolé el Himalaya, por Turquía hice el viaje en globo, compartí con gente de muchas nacionalidades en hostels y casas de familia. La lección más importante: tomar cada día como una aventura. Lo que veo, lo que aprendo, enseño y comparto: ver el sol con nuevos ojos cada día, aprender a confiar soltar los miedos, abrazar los riesgos porque siempre puedes empezar de nuevo en cualquier parte porque hay mucha gente buena en todo el mundo.

At 65, after my divorce, I decided to complete my bucket list and went travelling by myself around Eastern Europe and some parts of Asia. I flew over the Himalayas and in Turkey I went on a hot air balloon flight. Over my trip I also stayed in hostels and family houses, sharing lodgings with many different people from all over the world. The most important lesson I learnt over this time: take each day as a new adventure.

What I see, what I learn, teach and share is always to see the sun of each new day with fresh eyes, to learn to have the trust in yourself to let go of your fears, to embrace risk because you can always start anew wherever you might be, as across the world there are always kind and loving people to be there for you.



Diane McDonald

I started a small business called Travel Enriched, that enabled people aged 50-80 years to experience walking (as far or as little as they wanted each day) along several of the Camino trails to Santiago de Compostela. The joy of 'making it possible' for people who wanted to be part of the Camino experience - without the need to carry a heavy backpack, stay in crowded dormitories, and end the day with extremely sore feet - to enjoy engaging with the fascinating people of Portugal and Spain; learn about the history and culture of these diverse countries; and meet like minded people from many parts of the world. I have made lasting friendships with the kind and generous accommodation providers and cafe owners along 'The Way' who provided me with support.



Left: Diane McDonald on the Camino Portugues

Right: A picturesque section of 'The Way'



2013



Above: Wilma during her birthday photo-shoot organised by grandson Dean

Below: Many years earlier, Wilma riding with her grandsons Craig and Dean

Wilma Rossignuolo

I used to ride my motorbike on the farm every day. When my 85th birthday came around, my grandson Dean popped a leather vest and helmet on me, did a photo shoot and then took me for a ride around Diamond Creek and back to his home at Yarrambat. I ended up in the Diamond Creek News! Oh my gosh, my heart was pumping, I had not been on a Harley Davidson before, what a thrill!



Wilma on the bus to Kathleen Syme for a day with friends

2014

Wilma Rossignuolo

I love my Kathleen Syme community and the friends I have made there. When Michelle came to visit to do my Home Care Package a few years back she suggested that I join the community group for company. The bus comes and picks me up and the staff are so patient and competent. I love to go for the drives and have lunch out somewhere. The bus is such a great idea to get us out and about. I have enjoyed my last five years being part of the City of Melbourne community group.

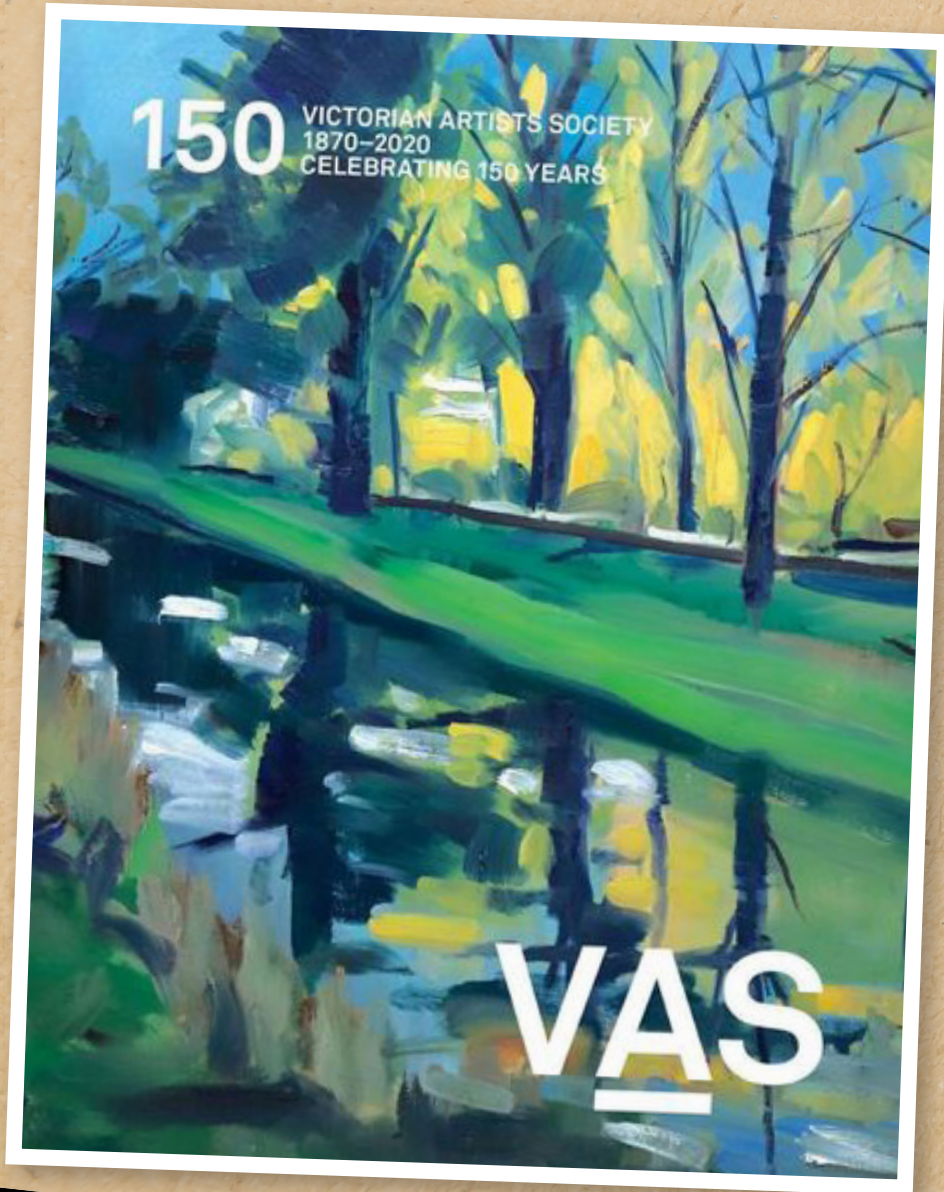
Bob Evans

I've been fortunate to have had some great adventures, often to do with my work: accompanying Paul Keating as a reporter on a trade mission to Indonesia when he was Prime Minister; attending the Broadway opening night of Les Miserables and interviewing the musical's producer, Cameron Mackintosh at the opening night party; leading three groups of high school students on annual study tours of significant battlefields at Gallipoli, the Western Front, the Thai Burma Railway and the DMZ between North and South Korea. But the most significant adventure was in April 2015 taking six veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam who were then residents of Vasey RSL Care's in Frankston South, to the Dawn Service of the ANZAC Day centenary at the Australian War Memorial. All six have since died. But each of them considered that ceremony to be an absolute high point of their later lives.



2015

2015



Rosemary Noble

I have always enjoyed drawing and painting, so when I retired from work I decided to take art classes at the Victorian Artists Society in East Melbourne. I loved the community of artists and fellow students that met there each week. Soon I volunteered to assist the office staff and after a couple of years, found myself on the Society's council. The group are volunteers dedicated to preserving the heritage of the 150 year old society by encouraging art instruction, exhibition and sale of artworks.

I was privileged in 2018 to undertake the task of completing the Society's 150th Anniversary commemorative book. This proved to be a wonderful way in which to get to know just how amazing a legacy the Society has, and is, providing to the cultural life of Melbourne.

2018

Amparo Collazos Umbarila

Grupo de residentes del edificio de vivienda pública organiza las actividades el Salvation Army y ayuda a generar sentido de pertenencia y logros con variedad de programas para distintas habilidades que nos motivan a estar activos y compartir socialmente. Por ejemplo, en 2019 con el grupo de jardinería de nuestro edificio y con el apoyo del Salvation Army hicimos un buen trabajo en nuestro jardín comunal. Fue un proceso gratificante que disfrutamos mucho y un logro compartido ver la transformación del jardín, compartir, socializar alrededor de los temas del jardín e inclusive conseguir el apoyo de arquitectos voluntarios que nos escucharon para incluir nuestras ideas en el diseño de planos para hacer futuras obras.

I joined our building's public housing residents' group which the Salvation Army runs activities for. This helps to create a sense of belonging and achievement with a diverse program of activities for people of different abilities and interest levels, that also motivates us to be active and socialise with each other.

For example in 2019, with our building's gardening group and the help of the Salvation Army we did a fantastic job of making a communal garden. This was a really satisfying process that we all enjoyed, witnessing the shared achievement of transforming the communal garden. Over this time, we shared thoughts, socialised and discussed gardening related topics whilst also receiving the help of architects volunteering their time to listen to our ideas and include them in the designs for the garden and future works.



2020



Wei Miao Hua

墨尔本是最喜欢居住的地方，空气新鲜阳光明媚，有安全感，人际关系友好温馨。人们虽然来自各个国家但都能相互尊重关心。拿我乘车来说，一次在车站我买菜的推车坏了，就有好心人主动帮我将菜送到家里，我很感动请他到我家喝茶他都不肯立刻就走了。还有一次我在车站摔倒了有3-4个人扶我，还有人提出送我回家。有一次我下车忘了包，有陌生人赶快把包送给我。类似的事举不胜举。

For me Melbourne is the place to be. I like the fresh air, the sunny weather, and I feel safe and warm around caring people who come from different countries. Once when I was out shopping my shopping trolley broke, and some kind-hearted person offered to take the groceries back to my home for me. They were so polite, and even said that they wouldn't want to bother me when I offered tea. Once I slipped, and 3-4 people helped me up and some offered to drive me home. Once I forgot my bag on the bus, and some passengers immediately brought it back to me. Stories like these are countless.

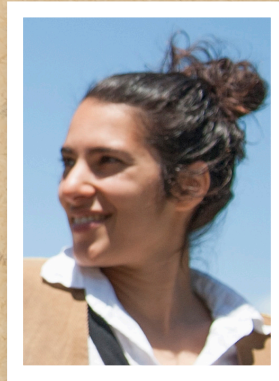
PROJECT TEAM

RADICAL ATTIC



SHAUN
WYKES

In 2001
*Shaun directed a film
and persuaded his
family to act in it.*



ALIA SYED
ROSE

In 2015
*Alia chose to stop
studying neuroscience
and focus on art.*



BRENDAN
TERNUS

In 2013
*Brendan moved to
China to help start an
arts education centre.*

CITY OF MELBOURNE - AGEING AND INCLUSION



SEAN
FITZGERALD

In 1996
*Sean started playing tennis. He's
represented SA, he coaches and
he's still passionate about the
game today.*



RACHAEL
LAYCOCK

In 2016
*Rachael ran 14 marathons
in 15 days throughout
Tasmania and raised
\$15,000 for Mental Health.*

The Years of Our Lives community timeline project was supported by City of Melbourne through an artist agreement with Radical Attic via Auspicious Arts and the 2020 Victorian Seniors Festival.

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***RADICAL
ATTIC***



**AUSPICIOUS
ARTS
PROJECTS**