



Photo: Getting involved in the festivities at our local Harmony Day celebrations

## HARMONY DAY CELEBRATIONS BRING COMMUNITY TOGETHER

Local people from nationalities across the globe joined together in March to mark Harmony Day and recognise the many cultures that call Horsham home.

The celebrations kicked off on a beautiful morning at the Angling Club in Horsham with a Welcome to Country by Jo Clark, followed by an opening message from Mayor Robyn Gulline. The crowd were then treated to a performance from a dance group made up of people from many different countries, including the Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam and India – a wonderful example of harmony in our community.

The day was also an opportunity to acknowledge the great work of some of the students in our learning programs at the Centre for Participation. Students with migrant backgrounds from our English language classes recently took part in our hospitality teaser course before getting involved in work experience at the 150km Feast – an annual weekend event on the banks of the Wimmera River, presented as an initiative of the Horsham Agricultural Society to celebrate our local farmers, winemakers and producers.

Students were presented with certificates in recognition of their participation and achievements during the 150km Feast,

highlighting the many pathways and opportunities available through the Centre for Participation for people to learn new skills, connect with others, and be part of their community. Participants reflected on the great experiences they had been involved, and the huge sense of belonging they felt while volunteering at the Feast.

The celebrations also included a fashion show of traditional dress, with a beautiful array of colour. People also had the opportunity to present their home country flags, with some becoming emotional when reflecting on their country of origin and journey to where they are today.

To finish things off, guests shared in an amazing selection of multicultural lunches and desserts prepared by students from our Laneway – Cafe without Borders. It was the perfect way to conclude our celebration of all the different cultures and backgrounds that shape our community and make it such a great place to live.

# KEEPING PEOPLE CONNECTED

## COMMUNITY TRANSPORT AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS PROGRAM UPDATE

Social isolation and loss of community connectedness is a key issue across our region – especially within smaller rural communities and for older members of our community. That’s why a key focus at the Centre for Participation is to support people who find it harder to stay connected with their peers, families and communities, helping boost their mental and physical health and create a stronger community for everyone.

Through our community transport and social support programs, committed volunteers provide services and support to help older and socially isolated people stay connected and active. Although some of the ways we support people has shifted since the pandemic, we’re now looking to reintroduce some of the initiatives we had to put on hold, as well as exploring new innovations to help people across our region.

Regular visits to older people and weekly outings for men’s and women’s groups that were suspended during the pandemic are now being reintroduced and welcomed by participants and volunteers alike. Our individual medical transport service continues to operate, helping people access the non-urgent medical care they need.

We’ve also had considerable interest from both volunteers and passengers to resume our weekly community bus from Kaniva to Horsham, and we’re making plans to get this service back up and running again as soon as possible. In late March we held a bus driving refresher training session and volunteer catch-up in Kaniva, with seven volunteers attending including one new volunteer. All volunteers completed their bus driving assessments, and we also worked through how the bus service will operate in the future in response to COVID.

We’re looking forward to serving our community again through the bus service, with people who have used it in the past commenting that the trips are very enjoyable and the volunteers are extremely helpful and polite. The Centre for Participation will begin calling past passengers to give them more information about the resumption of the service soon.



## WANT TO GET ON BOARD?

### COMMENCING PICK-UP LOCATIONS

The community bus will operate each Wednesday, commencing pick-ups from Kaniva at 8.45am and arriving in Horsham at 10.30am, with stops at Nhill, Dimboola and Pimpinio along the way.

### RETURN DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

For the return journey, the bus commences pick-ups from Horsham at 2.30pm before stopping at Nhill, Dimboola and Pimpinio on its way back to Kaniva.

### BOOK A RIDE

**Phone 1800 952 211 to arrange bookings.**

Please note that passenger numbers remain limited under the current COVIDSafe passenger transport restrictions.

### VOLUNTEER

To volunteer, contact the Centre for Participation on **5382 5607**.



Photo: Getting out and about on the community bus

# FRIENDLY VISITING PROGRAM

Our popular Friendly Visiting program is all about helping people in our community build social networks. Committed volunteers visit people in their home or nursing home for at least one hour per fortnight to have a cuppa, catch up, and stay connected.

Our volunteers might also help people get in touch with a loved one through FaceTime, play a board game, write and post a letter, make a cake, go fishing or chat on the phone – the possibilities are endless! Through these interactions, both participants and volunteers can build new and lifelong friendships that boost happiness, reduce stress and assist people to connect with their community.

On many occasions our volunteers have become close friends with the people they support, with several invited to milestone birthday parties or a Sunday lunch. And the benefits of being involved don't just extend to participants in the program, with volunteers also reaping the rewards of the new social connections. One volunteer has remarked that 'the person I take to appointments is more than someone I drive "somewhere" – they are a friend I wouldn't have met before'.

Other volunteers have reflected on how their new friendships have changed their lives: 'I met Alice through Centre for Participation and visit weekly. My week just doesn't feel right without catching up. I love hearing about her family and the

stories of her great-grandchildren – and she offers me so many great tips for growing healthy, lush vegetables!'

If you are 65 years or older and want to be involved, please visit [myagedcare.gov.au](https://myagedcare.gov.au) or call **1800 200 422** and request your services through the Centre for Participation.

To volunteer, please contact the Centre for Participation directly on **5382 5607**.

*'I love catching up with my friendly visitor. We have a cuppa and chat each week. Sometimes we will talk about what's in the newspaper and our family, and other times we talk about the garden. It's nice knowing she's coming – I look forward to her visits.'*

– Friendly Visiting program participant

## CONTINUING ON OUR PATH FOR GROWTH



The Board and management team at the Centre for Participation have now signed off on our 2021–2024 strategic plan, setting out the roadmap for how we'll continue to meet the needs of our community. It brings together the insights uncovered during strategic planning workshops held in late 2020, exploring where we are now, where we're going and how we'll get there.

It covers **four key themes and priorities** to help us build our impact as an organisation:

**CORE THEME 1:**  
**ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE FOR ANYBODY**

**PRIORITY:**  
**CREATE A VIBRANT, RESILIENT  
AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY**

**CORE THEME 2:**  
**WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER**

**PRIORITY:**  
**STRENGTHEN OUR REACH AND IMPACT  
THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS  
AND ALLIANCES**

**CORE THEME 3:**  
**AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP**

**PRIORITY:**  
**LEAD THE WAY – INSIDE AND OUT**

**CORE THEME 4:**  
**GETTING ON WITH BUSINESS**

**PRIORITY:**  
**DIVERSIFY REVENUE STREAMS  
FOR SUSTAINABLE IMPACT INTO THE  
FUTURE**

# HATS OFF TO MENTORS IN MARCH MENTORING MONTH!

Our volunteer mentors play a huge role in helping us support our community – so in March we held a ‘Hats off’ campaign to celebrate our current mentors and encourage new mentors to come on board.

Run in partnership with the Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network, and Uniting Wimmera, the campaign supported several new mentors to join up and begin their mentoring journey.

In particular, we are always looking for mentors to take part in our L2P program – an initiative that matches disadvantaged learner drivers with volunteer mentor drivers, helping learners get the driving experience they need to get their licence. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact the Centre for Participation on **5382 5607**.

And to all our amazing mentors already out there supporting our community – hats off to you!



Photo: Hats off to our mentors!

## BOOST FOR LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS

Local business owners got the latest insights into what’s happening in the world of small business when the Victorian Small Business Commissioner, Judy O’Connell, visited Horsham in March.

Initiated by Business Horsham, the event at the Horsham Golf Club opened up the opportunity to hear from the commissioner about challenges, new directions and innovations in small business.

In another boon for our local business owners, the Horsham Rural City Council also signed the Small Business Charter – a fantastic step in supporting our business community to grow and contribute to a thriving, resilient region.



Photo: Victorian Small Business Commissioner, Judy O’Connell, visits Horsham

## NEW ARRIVALS ROAD SAFETY PROGRAM

This program helps newly arrived people learn how to safely use our roads and get about. Upcoming sessions include:

### 1. KEY RISKS FOR PEOPLE USING THE ROAD

22 April 2021, 1.00–2.30pm

### 2. GETTING AROUND SAFELY: 1

29 April 2021, 1.00–2.30pm

### 3. GETTING AROUND SAFELY: 2

6 May 2021, 1.00–2.30pm

### 4. WALKING, CYCLING AND USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

13 May 2021, 1.00–2.30pm

### 5. ENFORCING OF ROAD RULES

20 May 2021, 1.00–2.30pm.

To register, please email [cecile@centreforparticipation.org.au](mailto:cecile@centreforparticipation.org.au)

This initiative is a partnership of VicRoads, Traffic Accident Commission, and the Centre for Participation.

# A BIRTHDAY DINNER WITH A DIFFERENCE!

## CECILE'S STORY

'My first experience delivering Meals on Wheels was on my birthday, which I did intentionally to make it extra special!

'My birthday was on the last day of the 5-day lock-down in February, and I wanted it to be meaningful. I realised that even with just one hour, you can make a huge impact for yourself and the community as well.

'Delivering food with a smile was one of the best experiences I have had. It really feels so good to be of service to others, especially the elderly.

'I am really keen to get the multicultural community involved in this program. Hopefully, I will be able to inspire others to get them to do this.'

To volunteer through the Centre for Participation's Meals on Wheels program, call **5382 5607**.



Photo: Cecile celebrates her birthday by delivering Meals on Wheels

# OPENING UP PATHWAYS THROUGH HOSPITALITY

## BEN'S STORY

Ben began work experience at Laneway – Cafe without Borders in 2019, while he was still a school student. Laneway Cafe is a place where people from any background and with all levels of experience are welcome to work, creating opportunities particularly for people with additional needs to break into the workforce, grow their skills, make new social connections, and get involved in the community.

'When I was volunteering there I would help prepare and sometimes help cook the meals, and plate the meals up and take them out to customers,' said Ben. 'I would also help the cafe clean up after it closed for the day.

'When COVID hit I had to stop volunteering there for a while, but when they moved to the Centre for Participation I was able to go back and help them again. When I was there I would help prepare meals for the elderly and also help make some meals for the windfarm.

'On Melbourne Cup day, I got the chance to work in the Social Pantry [food van] out the front of the local hospital. I also helped prep the ingredients for the two-day 150km Feast event.

'I loved being at Laneway Cafe and learning to work with different types of people.'

To find out more about being involved, pick up an information pack from the Centre for Participation or call **5382 5607**.



Photo: Ben gaining work experience at Laneway Cafe



# OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE CENTRE FOR PARTICIPATION!

## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING . . .



Photos: (Left) English language students and (right) Social Support worker Libby Wright use their lunchbreak to deliver Meals on Wheels



Photos: (Left) Students take part in work experience at the 150km Feast and (right) the English intermediate class gets job-ready by writing resumés



Photo: English conversational class learn hands-on hospitality skills

Contact us on **5382 5607**  
[info@centreforparticipation.org.au](mailto:info@centreforparticipation.org.au)  
[facebook@centreforparticipation](https://www.facebook.com/centreforparticipation)  
PO Box 267, Horsham, VIC 3402



CFP1965 04 2021



**YES! I WISH TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE CENTRE FOR PARTICIPATION BECAUSE I KNOW TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

You can make your donation online via <https://centreforparticipation.org.au/donate/>

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First name

Surname:

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Organisation:

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OR

Please debit my credit card  Visa  Mastercard

\$50  \$150  \$250  My choice \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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PRIVACY STATEMENT: Details you supply to us are entered into the Centre for Participation database. We adhere to the Privacy Act. We do not disclose your information to third parties.

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Centre for Participation, PO Box 267, HORSHAM VIC 3402