

victorian honour roll of women

2006

LEADERS PIONEERS  
COURAGEOUS  
VISIONARY ACHIEVERS  
ROLE MODELS  
INFLUENTIAL STRONG  
DETERMINED  
PASSIONATE  
REMARKABLE **WOMEN**  
COMPASSIONATE  
EMPOWERING  
ADVOCATES DYNAMIC  
INSPIRATIONAL  
OUTSTANDING  
ENTERPRISING

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Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to present the inspiring stories of the 24 women who have been added to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2006.

As Melbourne prepares to host the greatest sporting and community event, the Commonwealth Games, it is fitting that we pay special tribute to what women have achieved and can achieve, both on and off the sporting field.

These women are remarkable role models who have shown great determination in their quest to make positive changes, from which current and future generations of women will benefit.

In these pages, we share their personal stories of success, hearing about their journeys, what motivates them, their insights and achievements.

Each of these women has an extraordinary story to tell.

They have made an indelible impression on their communities in a range of areas including sport, education, the arts, health and social justice.

The Victorian Honour Roll allows us to publicly recognise women who have made outstanding contributions to our communities.

I am proud to honour and acknowledge these remarkable women and hope you too, will celebrate their successes.

Mary Delahunty MP  
Minister for Women's Affairs



## Leila Alloush

### Inspired by our community’s diversity

When Leila Alloush first arrived on Australian shores from Lebanon as a young 19-year-old who could not speak English, she knew some challenges would lie ahead.

She found herself surrounded by a remarkable mix of women from different cultural backgrounds – Vietnamese, Turkish, Italian, Greek, Russian and Chinese.

But what she received from the group – friendship, help and support – changed Leila’s life and became her inspiration to help other women in similar and difficult circumstances.

“They were accepting of my culture, religion and ethnicity and encouraged me to celebrate being Australian as well. They inspired me to do the same for other women regardless of their race, culture, religion or colour,” Leila said.

Leila brought a determination to succeed to her new land and refined her English skills while studying social sciences at university.

As a founding member of the Islamic Women’s Welfare Council of Victoria, a volunteer at the Arabic Social Service, part of the Victorian Arabic Professional Network and a member of Ministerial Advisory Council for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity, Leila’s work has helped give women a greater voice in the community.

She has researched training methods for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, encouraged and run leadership training, focused on social justice for all ethnic groups including the disadvantaged and promoted a culture of inclusion.

Leila also helped establish Women’s Health in the North, working with community groups at the grass roots level to secure funding and support for the service.

For more than 21 years, Leila has worked across many cultures to help women improve their health and well being, improve their learning and educational opportunities and create a brighter economic future.

“Women are taking on the responsibility of leadership with their own families, within their communities and beyond very seriously. They’re doing a lot of excellent work,” Leila said.



## Linda Beilharz

### A brave personal journey, an inspiration for all women

For 56 days Bendigo’s Linda Beilharz, 45, walked and skied the windiest, coldest, driest place on earth to reach the South Pole on New Year’s Eve 2004.

She left the comfort of her family and friends to embark on the biggest adventure of her life, hauling 75 kilograms of food, fuel, camping, communications and navigation equipment some 1200 kilometres.

When Linda set out on her epic journey across the Antarctica ice-cap, she was setting out to prove to herself that she could do it.

She never contemplated what it would mean to be the first Australian woman to reach the South Pole, nor did she realise the opportunities the public recognition would present, or the role model she would become for other women.

“My journey challenges the stereotypes of women, what they are supposed to do, and what they actually do,” Linda said.

“Life for women is like that. We have more opportunities than we think, because what is perceived to be available and what actually is available are two different things.”

As an avid bushwalker and outdoor enthusiast, it was a story of five British women’s journey to the Pole that gave her the inspiration to try herself.

“They made it sound do-able, rather than an impossible task. I thought I could do that.”

Many people didn’t take Linda’s plans seriously until she said her goodbyes and set off with great courage, drive and a dogged self belief, which pushed her across the vast white landscape.

“You need to know your own limitations and what you are capable of. It was hard, but no more difficult than I expected.”

Although she faced danger and hardship the vastness and beauty of Antarctica’s pristine wilderness left an indelible impression on her.

Linda hopes her story will inspire women to set their own goals, have the courage to go out and face the challenges and achieve them.



Elleni Bereded-Samuel

### Building bridges of understanding

Elleni Bereded-Samuel is passionate about empowering migrants to reach their full potential.

“It is something I love to do,” Elleni, of St Albans, said.

Elleni was born in Ethiopia and arrived in Australia with her husband and seven-month-old baby in 1996. After receiving permanent residence as a political refugee, she immediately began working with migrants from the Horn of Africa.

Distressed by the fighting in her homeland, she wanted to bring Africans together under one roof in a peaceful project. Her first project was compiling stories from Horn of Africa refugees living in the western suburbs for Maribyrnong City Council.

“People were not talking to each other in Australia and I believed that things were happening in Africa because of the government, not the people,” she said.

“So with the story-telling project, I took the challenge to bring women together and it was very successful.”

Inspired by her work, Victoria University asked Elleni to establish a bridging program for women from the Horn of Africa.

Elleni, 38, has since been the driving force behind several community projects including the Inner Western Migrant Resource Centre, the Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women’s Coalition, and the Horn of Africa Communities Network.

As the Community Partnerships Officer for Victoria University she promotes access to education, training and employment for people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

In September 2005 she was appointed a Victorian Multicultural Commissioner providing the State Government with independent advice about the needs and views of Victoria’s culturally diverse communities.

“The only way we can assist the community is to empower the community,” she said.



Betty Butcher  
(1925–1999)

### A life-long champion of women’s cricket

Betty Butcher lived life like every day was an adventure. And it is a philosophy that her daughter Sue Montesano has adopted.

“She lived every moment of her life and had no regrets, and I have tried to live my life like that too,” she said.

The late Betty Butcher was born in 1925 and developed an interest in cricket from her father who was an RSL cricketer and a member of the Melbourne Cricket Club. Learning to score before she went to school, Betty started her 50-year passion for cricket playing games with boys living in the street.

At 10 she joined her first team. At 20 she was a squad member. And for 40 years she encouraged women and girls to play in sport.

Betty held many positions in the cricketing world including Victorian Women’s Cricket Association President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

She was the association’s delegate to the Australian Women’s Cricket Council and received a life membership in 1970. She was also a delegate to, and secretary for, the International Women’s Cricket Council. At the time of her death in 1999, Betty was both President of the Association and the Hawthorn Ladies Cricket Club.

Sue said one of her proudest memories of her mother was when she travelled to India as manager of the Australian under-25 women’s team.

“She met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who was supportive of the tour and they became friends,” Sue said.

“When Mrs Gandhi came to Australia, she came to visit mum, but mum was out! The only way she knew she had visited was because the neighbours told her.”

Sue said her mother was always supportive and involved in her sporting career and the pair played cricket together.

“She loved young people and encouraged them to do their best,” she said.



## Elaine Canty

### Easy as ABC

Elaine Canty offers some sage advice.

Be brave – step out of your comfort zone and take a risk.

The Hawthorn woman has taken up many opportunities and some of her major career decisions have been “calculated risks” as she likes to call them.

“I’m not foolhardy,” she said.

“But you have to be courageous.”

Elaine has a long list of achievements of which she can be justifiably proud. She was the first female sports broadcaster on ABC radio and television, first woman to anchor a national Olympic Games coverage for ABC, and the first and only woman to sit on the AFL Tribunal.

Her busy schedule is testament to her admission that she finds it “hard to say no”.

“I am a sucker for a person who is dedicated and passionate, whose heart is in the right place and just needs a bit of help,” she said.

Apart from her ground-breaking work in sports media, she has also used her skills and her profile to help many organisations.

She has been a strong and purposeful advocate for women’s health for many years and on the boards of the Royal Women’s Hospital and VicHealth. As the Chairwoman of the hospital’s Community Advisory Committee she has played a leading role in hospital policy.

Along the way, she has crossed paths with some inspirational women, including Dr Catherine Hamlin who works in Ethiopia providing free reconstructive surgery to women with fistulas and the Greek Minister for Sport, former actress Melina Mercouri.

Elaine admires both women for being strong, selfless and doing jobs that influence nations.

“I admire people who have passion, whether dramatic passion, or the passion that comes with dedication,” she said.



## Jean Cheshire OAM

### Offering love and affection

Jean Cheshire's faith has taught her the importance of offering love and support to all, and she has led by example.

For 56 years she has taught religious education and for the past 46 years has been a mainstay at the Hurlingham Aged Care Home. She is a past president and committee member and plays the organ at the fortnightly worship service for residents.

But it is her work with prisoners that has brought her great rewards. She first became involved through playing the organ at Pentridge Prison for the men’s Sunday afternoon service.

When the Women’s Correctional Centre in Deer Park opened in 1996 Jean started volunteering and continued to visit the women two days a week until 2005.

“Everyone knew there that they could get a hug from me, or ‘Grandma’ as they used to call me,” Jean said.

“The women confided in me. My work at the prison was often with the families – bringing them together again.”

She continues to receive letters from many of the women she supported over the years.

It is Jean’s love of people and her willingness to help that has led to numerous awards and recognition for her life’s work. She was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to women, particularly through the National Council of Women of Victoria.

“Everything I have ever done has been done for love, never for payment,” Jean said.

“I do not feel this is my honour – it is the honour of everyone who contributes to the community and makes a difference in people’s lives.”

An avid writer she writes two letters of encouragement a week to people who inspired her but who rarely received recognition.

“There are so many wonderful women who do so much for people and make other people’s lives possible,” Jean said.



Liz Ellis

An Australian champion

As someone keenly aware of the economic imbalance between men and women’s sports, Liz Ellis smiles quietly to herself when young women tell her that they want to be a professional netball player.

“I think – if only I could be a professional netballer too.”

Despite this, Liz believes community recognition of women in sport has improved since she first started playing in the early 1990s.

And it shows in the faces of the young fans of one of Australia’s most successful sportswomen.

Captain of the Australian Netball Team since 2004 and Captain of the Sydney Swifts since 2000, Liz Ellis has been a fixture in Australian netball since she joined the senior Australian squad in 1992.

She has also represented Australia at both national championships and the Commonwealth Games.

As an ambassador for Business Club Australia: Melbourne 2006, Liz has assisted international business networking and outcomes around the Commonwealth Games.

Liz is also fostering young talent by getting involved in the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Future Athletes Clinics.

Her outstanding achievement in Australian sport has made her a role model for many young women.

“To know that young girls look up to you and what you do is huge,” Liz, 33, said.

“I went shopping recently and the assistant recognised me from a netball game she went to. She remembered that we were very patient signing autographs for her and her friends,” Liz said.

“It was the first sporting event she had ever gone to and now she continues to go to netball games. It’s great to think I have made at least one person interested in sport.”



Molly Hadfield  
OAM

Speaking up for women’s rights

Molly Hadfield laughs as she recalls how her family would tease her that she “was vaccinated with a gramophone needle”. But it is through talking and standing up for her beliefs that she has made a real difference to the lives of so many in the community.

Mary Catherine “Molly” Doyle was born in Corowa, NSW in 1922, and grew up surrounded by “inspirational women”. Her grandmother, mother and aunts were all champions for women’s rights.

“They were all doing something in their own way at that time, and that is what inspired me,” she said.

As a volunteer, she became an activist to campaign for women’s rights and social justice. Among her many achievements, Molly is particularly proud of helping create ‘a community’ in Chelsea, where she moved in the 1960s with her husband and two young children.

In between raising a family and working full time, and with the support of her husband, she became involved in the Progress Association.

Molly established the *50 and Over Get Up and Go* group in Chelsea Heights in 1987 to help women isolated in their home, and became a committee member with Housing for the Aged Action Group and the Older Persons Action Centre.

She has also been a member of the Union of Australian Women for 45 years and was delighted to be chosen as the face of the 2005 Victorian Seniors Festival.

“I never thought I would be a poster girl at my age,” she laughed.

At 83, Molly, of Preston, is winding down her commitments but is still dedicated to working for peace.

“I will never give up demonstrating for peace and for low-cost housing for women and while I can do it I will,” she said.

“We need to be involved in our community. I think we should all contribute something to this planet that we live on.”

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advocates dynamic inspirational outstanding enterprising





Barbara Hocking

Putting the law right for all Australians

When Barbara Hocking first read about native title she was astonished. At first glance it was a foreign concept. No-one was talking about, let alone interested in native title. But for Barbara it was a concept that resonated. She had found her calling and would dedicate 30 years of her professional career not only to educating the public, but also to changing the law of native title. Barbara, now 77, of Toorak, first learned about native title while studying law at Melbourne University. One of the legal text books recommended for reading was *The Legal Conscience* by Felix Cohen focussing on Native American native title. “A lot of the work he did was for the recognition of Native American land and I thought why don’t we have that here? This was in the 1960s and hardly anyone in the white community had heard of it in Australia,” Barbara said. So she read some more, researched the issue in Canada and New Zealand and then started pushing for native title in Australia. With a small but passionate group committed to their cause, she set about changing the course of history. “We had to change the law,” she said. “We had to convince the High Court that the legal system had made a mistake and that native titles existed.” In 1981 she was the first barrister briefed to advise on the Mabo case. By the time the historic case concluded in 1992, its namesake Eddie Mabo had died but he had been confident of the case’s outcome. “He felt, as I did, that it would succeed. And it did,” Barbara said. “I gained a great deal of satisfaction from the case, not only was it very rewarding to be involved in setting something right that was wrong in the law but it was also wrong ethically. “I was pleased that the law was put right and put right for all Australians.”

Setting a path for the future

Sian Hughes and her family spent Boxing Day 2005 contemplating the fateful day 12 months before, which changed their lives. Sian, 47, and her family were holidaying in the village of Unawatuna, Sri Lanka, when the tsunami that devastated much of Asia hit. Sian, a paediatrician, immediately began collecting tourists’ medical kits and treating the injured, working non-stop for more than three days organising evacuations and treating the injured. Since then, her work for Sri Lanka has continued as a member of the Australia Sri Lanka Medical Aid Team. “Although it was a horrendous experience, on another level it... has made us much more aware of people in third world countries,” she said. Sian returned to Sri Lanka in July 2005 to conduct clinics and distribute aid, and is planning another visit in June 2006 to disperse medical and school supplies. Her long-term plan is to establish a program to send young Australians to Sri Lanka to work in orphanages or teach English to inspire the next generation to continue to support people in developing nations. Inspired by what she describes as Australians’ sense of social equity, Sian moved from the UK in 1988. She has been working at Eastern Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service for the past eight years. Her area of expertise is community child health and she works with children who have behavioural problems such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, autism and Asperger’s Syndrome. For 13 years she has travelled from her home in Elwood to a private practice at Coolaroo, where all of her patients are bulk billed. Sian, who says she is inspired by her husband Tony Heselev, says she hopes to instil in her children Sam, Rosie and Matilda the joy of helping others. “It is rewarding to really get involved in caring for other people,” she said.

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## Sister Marie Kehoe AM

### Creating a safer community

In some families a belief in the importance of justice and fairness is an heirloom passed down through generations.

You might say then that it was in Sister Marie Kehoe’s nature to help others.

She has had a passion for encouraging others to have the confidence to form an opinion and speak their minds.

Like her mother before her, Sister Marie, 73, of Essendon, decided a career in education was one way of helping people understand and defend their rights.

Starting as a teacher in schools across inner Melbourne and then in tertiary education, Sister Marie became the Director at Australian Catholic University, a position she held for 20 years.

In response to the 1987 shootings in Hoddle and Queen streets, she became a foundation member of the Victorian Community Council Against Violence.

As a member of the Council for more than 16 years, she helped develop and implement new violence prevention programs and build community awareness about the social impact of violence.

“I realised I could play a part in creating a safer community through educating young people,” she said.

Sister Marie’s work within the Council was also influential in changing the way victims of crime are treated by the justice system.

Reform that recognises the importance of factors other than the judicial process in someone’s return to well being.

Underpinning all of her work has been her faith in respect for people and compassion for victims.

“I believe community attitudes develop as we mature and I wanted to teach people respect for one another and respect for other people’s rights in the community.”



## Donna King

### Unlocking a brighter future

Eight years ago Donna King was serving time in jail. Today she is helping women from the other side of the prison bars.

“I certainly do think it’s amazing,” she said.

“Not many people make it. Lots of women who go through system spend the rest of their lives in prison, or they die. It’s hard to break the cycle.”

But through perseverance, determination and support Donna King, 44, of Moonee Ponds, has turned her life around. She now educates the community about women prisoners, and former prisoners, and helps the women themselves.

“It is an achievement being here and doing what I am doing,” she said.

“I am not hurting people who I used to hurt, and I am giving back to the community and to other women. Those women do not have a voice and it makes me feel special that I can talk on their behalf.”

Donna said a real incentive to make changes was her son, whom she had not seen since he was seven.

“I had a child who I had not seen for many years and I thought when he came looking for me, I didn’t want him to find me back in prison or dead,” she said.

Her resolve and determined effort was rewarded when he contacted her in October 2005.

“He is 17 now. That was huge - it’s made this journey worthwhile.”

Donna said she is particularly proud of the work she was doing with Turning Point and its Bridging the Gap program – helping women pre and post release assimilate into the community. She also worked with the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders’ mentoring program.

“Last July I was fortunate to go to Italy and give a paper to the International Women in Justice Conference on what works with women offenders,” she said.

But her greatest achievement is living outside a cell and she says “It’s great to be free.”





**Ethleen King CBE  
(1906–1999)**

**Organisation builder**

Ethleen King spent more than 40 years helping to build community organisations, which have substantially improved the lives of women, young people and children in Victoria.

After qualifying as a lawyer in 1929, Ethleen began a lifelong interest in using her legal skills to help form new organisations to provide help to those in need. The organisation’s durability testifies to her extraordinary ability to recognise areas of high need and to think long-term.

She helped draft the Constitution of one of Victoria’s earliest pre-school providers the Lady Gowrie Child Care Centre in North Carlton. 65 years later, the Centre is widely recognised as one of Victoria’s leaders in childcare services.

Ethleen continued her interest in pre-school education by also helping to form the Free Kindergarten Union, the Victorian Branch of the Australian Pre-School Association and the National Pre-School Association.

She helped establish the Children’s Book Council of Victoria in 1953, which continues to organise activities and events that promote reading for children.

She again contributed her legal skills to the establishment of the Advisory Council for Children with Impaired Hearing in 1968.

Ethleen also recognised the damage caused by economic and legal discrimination against women. In 1952, her legal skills helped the National Council of Women to contribute to the Basic Wage and Standard Hours Inquiry in which employers had applied to reduce the female rate of pay to 60 per cent of the male basic wage. She also assisted the Council in advocating for law reform to ensure that women received a fairer division of assets acquired during marriage.

Ethleen also became the first woman appointed to the first La Trobe University Council in 1967.

Awarded a CBE in 1969 for her wide range of contributions to welfare services in Australia, Ethleen continued her life-long commitment to improving services for women and children well into the 1980s.



**Ayse Köksüz**

**Building bridges between communities**

Ayse Köksüz, 52, came to Australia more than 20 years ago and, like many migrants, started work in Melbourne’s manufacturing industries.

But for the past 10 years, Ayse, who lives in Meadow Heights, has devoted herself to developing and improving services for her community.

She has been involved with the Victorian Turkish Women’s Association, the Meadow Heights Turkish Women’s Association and the Turkish Young Mothers Association.

Her voluntary work with Orana Family Services, a Uniting Church community service agency, has helped many isolated young women and families in north-west Melbourne.

In addition to organising home visits and social activities, she has linked families and individuals with existing support services and development opportunities, ranging from exercise and education classes to computer skills and stress management training.

Her education classes have covered sensitive community issues, including family violence, and given Turkish-speaking women a chance to raise and discuss issues in a safe and supportive environment.

Orana credits her community leadership style with having helped encourage new Turkish-speaking volunteers at both Orana and other local community agencies.

Her work has also helped encourage the employment of staff with the language skills to deliver services that provide support for families, children and individuals.

Ayse Köksüz’s commitment to community development means the true measure of her accomplishments is not just found in her many own personal achievements.

It also includes the many opportunities she has helped to create for others to make their own contribution to their community.

In this way, she has made a major contribution, both to the lives of people living in the north-west of Melbourne and to the wider Victorian community.



## Margo Koskelainen OAM

### Batting for women’s sport

She is softly spoken, but Margo Koskelainen has a will of steel.

As a softball umpire she has faced many challenges, but overcome them all and been a trail blazer for women’s sport.

Margo took up the sport when she was 12.

“A friend of my mother’s, a neighbour, said she was involved and thought softball would be a good sport for me to play. And I’ve been at it ever since,” she said.

Initially a player, she found the game “addictive,” which led her to becoming an umpire.

“What I like about it now is the camaraderie of umpires. Umpires world wide have a closeness that is unique,” she said.

Umpiring has been a part of Margo’s life for 35 years. Her many achievements include being the first female umpire-in-chief, a world championship, awarded life membership of Softball Australia in 1993, a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2000 and being elected to the International Softball Hall of Fame in 2003.

She says that one her proudest moments came at the international softball congress in Puerto Rico in 1995.

“Australia managed to convince the delegates of the playing rules commission that some of the proposals would change the game totally. There were proposed changes to the bulk of the pitching, batting and base running rules, but in the rewrite so many of the fundamentals had been left out. We were effective in having the proposals withdrawn,” she said.

Living in Shepparton, Margo has overcome the tyrannies of distance to excel at her sport, and encouraged other women to chase their sporting dreams.

“I think if you want to do it, you have to talk to your family and let them know that it is important to you,” she said.

“I never dreamt for one minute that I would represent my country.

“But I want to contribute to my sport because it has given me so much,” she said.



## Kerryn Manning

### Winning attitude the key to success

She is known as ‘the face of harness racing’.

At 29, Kerryn Manning, of Great Western, is the only person in the Southern Hemisphere who has driven 300 horses to a win in a season. She is also the youngest Australasian harness racing driver to reach 2000 career wins and holds the world record for the most wins by a female driver.

Kerryn has been driving horses professionally since she was 16 and is an official ambassador for her sport having been involved in several marketing campaigns for harness racing. Kerryn is a positive and enthusiastic role model for women.

“I guess I am proud of my achievements,” Kerryn said. “I never expected to get as far as I did. I was just happy to get a ride.”

A humble champion who prefers to let her racetrack performances do the talking, Kerryn is tireless in her support for young women trying to break into the industry.

“A lot more women are getting into it now. It has been great the past few years,” Kerryn said.

Kerryn is a big supporter of the pony trot circuit for children aged six to 15, which features about 70 races a year.

“The circuit is a great way to get more women involved in sport,” Kerryn said.

Kerryn said the go-get-them attitude of Gaita Pullicino inspired her to keep at it and do her best.

“She used to beat me all the time and I just thought her attitude towards everything she did was great,” Kerryn said.

She said those wanting to do well in the industry, needed patience, be prepared to work hard and expect many late nights. Working in a male-dominated industry has never been a problem for Kerryn.

“Hopefully more women will get involved in harness racing – maybe we can take over from the men one day.”



Professor  
Marilyn Lake

## Women and stories of the Nation

In the 150 plus years of Victorian self-government and the 100 plus years since Federation, women have been active participants in the creation and development of Victoria.

Campaigns such as the struggle for universal suffrage empowered women to be citizens but their stories are not always prominent.

Reassessing women's contribution to the story of the nation has been historian Marilyn Lake's work for more than 20 years.

As one Australia's leading historians, she has helped develop Women's Studies at universities, museums and schools.

Professor Lake, 57, has written on a range of subjects in the academic press and in newspapers, and has been a regular contributor to public discussions on issues including equal pay, work-family balance, constitutional change, racism and the history of the labour movement.

She is the author of several books including *Getting Equal: the History of Australian Feminism* (1999) and *Faith*, the prize-winning biography of one Australia's most important political activists, Faith Bandler (2003).

In 1988, Professor Lake was the Foundation Director of Women's Studies at La Trobe University and since 1994 she has held a Personal Chair in History at the university. Her academic leadership has helped create new generations of students who have increased our understanding of women's contribution to Australian history.

The significance of Marilyn's academic standing is reflected in her appointments as Chair of Australian Studies at Harvard University in the United States, Visiting Fellow at Stockholm University in Sweden, Visiting Professor at the University of Sydney and adjunct Professor at the Humanities Research Centre at the Australian National University.

In arguing for a more comprehensive and sophisticated understanding of the past, she has written that: "Women's history cannot be fruitfully written without reference to men, (and) neither can men's history be properly written without reference to men's relations with women."



Nicole Livingstone  
OAM

## Inspiring her nation

Nicole Livingstone has inspired a nation with her swimming. But for Nicole, 34, her greatest inspiration is her late mother's outlook on life.

Elsie Livingstone passed away from ovarian cancer in 2001, motivating Nicole and her sister Karen to pay tribute to their mother through the formation of the National Ovarian Cancer Network.

"For me, my mum was a strong role model in my life," Nicole said. "She was the kind of woman who would get things done."

The not-for-profit network aims to raise awareness of the disease that kills 800 Australian women a year.

"The goal is to make women aware of their ovaries and the symptoms of ovarian cancer and then empower them to do something," Nicole said.

She gains great satisfaction from knowing the organisation had made a real difference.

"We know that we have saved lives, because we have received letters from women saying that," she said.

Nicole's career achievements include competing at three Olympic Games and three Commonwealth Games and being the only female host for Wide World of Sports television sports program. But she said it was work with the network that had brought her great rewards.

"You only realise when you lose someone close that sport is just sport, the true heroes are people saving lives and making a difference to other people's lives."

Nicole is now a mother herself – to twins Ella and Josh who are 3½ years. She hopes to teach her children what her mother taught her – to be nice people and try to make a difference.

The children sponsor twins in Ethiopia through World Vision, helping them form a social conscience.

"We just want them to be the best people they can be, and think of the bigger picture," she said.



Effie Meehan

Working from the heart

Not being able to speak the language in an English-speaking community is a challenge. But not being able to speak English and having a disability can make life even more difficult.

Effie Meehan, of St Albans, is helping overcome those barriers, giving culturally and linguistically diverse people with a disability a voice in the community.

“I encourage people with a disability to speak up for themselves and empower themselves,” Effie, 54, said.

Volunteering and working out Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities and at the Migrant Resource Centre North West over the years, Effie advocates on behalf of migrants with a disability and helps community members become leaders and advocates.

“I work in the community quite a bit because it is in my heart to help people,” Effie said.

Working with migrants with a disability from different backgrounds, Effie organises groups to meet on a regular basis and discuss the issues that are important to them.

She then advocates on their behalf for better participation opportunities and services to improve their health and well-being.

“I sit on many committees and boards. Talking is good but we need more action,” Effie said.

Effie’s is proudest of her work with Women’s Health Service and encouraging migrant women with a disability to have pap smears.

“It was an issue that was neglected. The project was great because we had more than 800 women over 10 years have a pap smear.”

The pap smear kit they put together proved life-saving for one woman in particular who found out she had cancer.

“It was caught in the early stages, she survived and is now doing well,” Effie said.

“I want more people to do things from the heart rather than for payment.”



Jean Melzer OAM

Encouraging lifelong education

In 1981, after seven years of representing Victoria and as one of a handful of women Senators, Jean Melzer made her valedictory address to the Senate.

In it she said that when she looked at women around Australia “they are on the move”.

True to her word, on leaving the Senate, Jean, of Cape Paterson, has not rested for a moment.

Now 80, she has actively pursued interests in protecting the environment and increasing opportunities for life-long learning in local communities.

As the current President of the University of the Third Age (U3A) Network in Victoria, she has helped older Victorians extend their education.

More than 18,000 senior Victorians are members of the University of the Third Age and use the low-cost educational and recreational activities voluntarily provided by fellow members.

Her work in developing and supporting new U3As has contributed to there now being 71 U3As across the state.

Her particular interest has been the development of adult education, employment and recreation opportunities for people living on Victoria’s south-east coast.

Jean’s interest in people has been matched by her work protecting the natural environment. As President of the Cape Paterson Progress Association, she has been involved in long-term planning to prevent further degradation of the local coastal environment from pollution, salinity and increasing tourism.

In 2004, in recognition of her work, she was awarded both the Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia and the Victorian Premier’s Senior Achiever Award.

Twenty-five years after she left the Senate, she says the women she sees in U3A continue to be on the move.

“It’s inspirational to see them, heads up, shoulders back and talking – not just about their grandchildren – but also about literature, politics, arts and science. That’s what life long education really means”.



## Professor Marcia Neave AO

leaders pioneers courageous visionary achievers  
role models influential strong determined passionate  
remarkable women compassionate empowering  
advocates dynamic inspirational outstanding enterprising

### Reforming laws and changing societies

For more than 25 years Marcia Neave has been involved in shaping changes to the laws that bind and define our community. She has had a particular interest in the way the law affects women, particularly poor or powerless women.

In her mind the law can be contradictory. On the one hand, the powerless often look to the law for a remedy. On the other hand the law has often been an instrument for the preservation of the status quo.

“The law historically reflected the experiences of men because the people who made the law, and the people who applied the law, and the people to whom the law was generally applied, were men,” she said.

Law reform is therefore one important element of building a more just and inclusive society. Professor Neave, 61, has made a substantial contribution to changes in the legal systems of the Victoria, New South Wales and Australia.

Marcia’s work was recognised with her appointment as an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 1999 and her appointment to senior academic positions at Australian and American Universities, including a Personal Chair in Law at Monash University.

In addition to her published work on prostitution law reform, property law, family law, trusts and administrative law, Marcia has received a large number of statutory and ministerial appointments to both State and Commonwealth Government bodies.

In 2000, with the re-establishment of the Victorian Law Reform Commission she was appointed as the first Chairperson and full-time Commissioner.

Under her leadership, the Commission has worked on a range of significant proposals, including the removal of the defence of provocation in murder trials, changes to the criminal justice system’s handling of rape and sexual assault cases, and increased access for single women and lesbians to IVF services.



## Lady Joyce Price OBE CMG

### Guiding young women to achieve

When 13-year-old Joyce Price made her Girl Guide Promise to ‘do her best, help other people and keep the Guide Law’, she never imagined it was a lifelong commitment.

During almost 50 years of volunteer service to the Guides, Lady Joyce Price has become a role model and her influence and leadership has helped create greater understanding between women of all nations.

She put her Guiding career on hold while she completed a Masters of Science degree at the University of Adelaide, but resumed when her daughters joined the local Brownies in Caulfield.

She became District Commissioner for the Girl Guides of Caulfield and later Victorian State Commissioner.

The pinnacle of her success was in 1975 when she was elected Chairman of the World Association Girl Guides and Girl Scouts where she was responsible for the administration and policies of the Guide Movement in 104 countries, affecting eight million members.

Now 90, she is the only person to serve a double term as Chairman and the only Australian hold the position.

Lady Price travelled extensively with the Guides and stayed with Lady Baden-Powell, World Chief Guide, when in London and gave the eulogy at her memorial service at Westminster Abbey.

Awarded the Officer of the British Empire (OBE) and Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) for services to the Girl Guides, she was also awarded the Silver Fish for International Guiding Award, the Silver Kangaroo, an Australian Guiding Award, and prestigious World Association Girl Guides and Girl Scouts medal for exceptional service to the Guides Association.

The new Guides Victoria headquarters is named in her honour.





## Val Sarah AM

### Building opportunities in Ballarat and beyond

In 1962 and newly arrived from England, Val Sarah became the first female announcer on BTV6 in Ballarat.

The program she produced and presented focused on new opportunities for women created by the rapid pace of change.

Her 14 year on-air television career was in itself substantial, but it was just one part of more than 40 years work developing ways for women to become involved in the Ballarat community.

She has played a central role in building and supporting local organisations, starting the first of 19 Probus clubs in the area, providing advice and support to the Ballarat Arts Foundation and developing Ballarat's Learning City status.

However, her contribution has extended well beyond the boundaries of Ballarat.

Through her involvement with Zonta International, an international service organisation with a membership of 33,000 women and men in 71 countries, she has worked to improve the status of women through practical initiatives in health, education, micro-credit, leadership and justice.

Beginning as the Charter President of the Zonta Club in Ballarat in 1978, Val was later appointed International President of Zonta between 1998 and 2000.

In 2001 she became a national Committee member of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in Australia and was subsequently invited to be the organisation's adviser on marketing and sponsorship.

She is driven by the enormous potential she sees in young women.

"They have limitless energy to explore what life has to offer. They have talent, they are well disciplined, and they are our inspiration for the future."

Val was appointed a Member (AM) of the Order of Australia in 2001, for her service to women internationally and her service to the Australian community through cultural, social welfare and youth groups.



## Betty Watson OAM

### The pioneer of women's basketball

"Women's sport isn't worth watching because women aren't as good as men at playing sport."

That was all the motivation Betty Watson needed. It was this community attitude during the late '60s that Betty was determined to end. So she took up the challenge to promote basketball to women.

In less than 50 years, Betty helped change women's basketball in Australia from almost non-existent to the Australian women's basketball team winning two Olympic silver medals and a bronze.

She has seen the sport grow from a strictly amateur competition with an emphasis on fundraising for survival during the '70s, to a semi-professional Women's National Basketball League (WNBL) with sponsors and international recognition.

During the early days, Betty advertised in local papers for women to learn to play basketball and knocked on sports editors' doors for media coverage.

"I used to drive them crazy. I'd do my homework and come up with great story ideas about women's basketball and find interesting women for them to write about," she said.

Betty helped lead change through coaching, establishing administrative and training programs around the State for referees and officials and lobbying for women's basketball to be accepted into the Olympic Games.

Betty was President of the Victorian Women's Basketball Association and President of the Australian Women's Basketball Council for 20 years, and although now retired, she is often sought out for her advice.

As well as her list of achievements, Betty, 80, of Airey's Inlet, is admired for her skills, vision and inspirational leadership. Her contribution to women's basketball is recognised in the Betty Watson Rookie of the Year award given the WNBL's best new player.

"We've produced some amazing female talent and the standard of women's basketball now is incredibly high.

"I think it's much more interesting to watch than the men's games," she said.





Messages

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