

**COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT**  
**EXHIBITION** HER PLACE:  
REMARKABLE WOMEN

**HER PLACE**  
REMARKABLE WOMEN

24 MAY-18 JUNE 2017

**COPACC** (COLAC OTWAY PERFORMING  
ARTS & CULTURAL CENTRE)

[www.herplacemuseum.com](http://www.herplacemuseum.com)

**SUSAN ALBERTI AC**  
**PAOLA BALLA**  
**PAT BIGHAM AFSM**  
**MAISIE CARR (NEE FAWCETT)**  
**JOAN KIRNER AC**  
**VAL LANG AM**  
**BRIGITTE MUIR OAM**  
**HALIMA MOHAMED**  
**PETA SEARLE**  
**DIANE WRIGHT**



Proudly supported by the Victorian Government

This toolkit has been developed as a resource for media, individuals and groups who would like raise to awareness of the exhibiton *Her Place: Remarkable Women* and Her Place Women's Museum Australia.

This toolkit contains:

- About Her Place Women's Museum
- Information about the exhibition
- Bios of the 10 women featured in the exhibition
- Public Program information
- Template website copy
- Social media guide
- Image credit information



**Her Place Women's Museum Australia**

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# THE ORGANISATION

Her Place honours Australian women, inspires young people and educates everyone.

Her Place is a not-for-profit organisation that celebrates the social, civic and entrepreneurial achievements of all Australian women and their role in shaping our nation.

It originated in 2014 when a group of women from diverse backgrounds met to discuss forming a group to honour the achievements of women and investigate the possibility of establishing a museum dedicated to the cause.

Her Place's vision is to create a public space that honours the achievements of women, through exhibitions, public programs, education resources and an archive.

In 2016 Her Place merged with Women's Heritage Centre Victoria, an organisation established in 2015, dedicated to creating a physical keeping place for women's records and a living digital archive that acknowledges the distinctive contribution of women to the culture and future of Victoria.

Together the organisation received seed funding from the State Government through its Gender Equity Strategy in December 2016 to investigate the capacity to create an online museum and archive and develop a series of touring exhibitions that bring the stories of women, including recipients of the Victorian Honour Roll of Women, to metropolitan and regional audiences in 2017.

Her Place Women's Museum Australia is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee, registered with ASIC and is currently seeking tax deductibility status as a charity recognised by the ATO.

# THE EXHIBITION

*Her Place: Remarkable Women* honours the lives and contributions of women throughout Victoria. The third in a series of exhibitions presented by Her Place Women's Museum Australia, it celebrates the work, achievements and historical significance of women through video interviews, photographs, biographical accounts and personal artefacts.

The exhibition tells the stories of ten women from across Victoria including the south west. These women have contributed to Australian society at both national and local levels through their work as artists and activists, farmers and businesswomen, scientists and community leaders. The group includes a former state premier and the first Australian woman to climb Mt Everest.

Seven of the women featured in the exhibition have been inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women. Established in 2001, the Honour Roll pays tribute to women who have been pioneers in their field and who have improved the lives of women and the broader Victorian community. Each year, at the time of International Women's Day, a new group of remarkable Victorian women is inducted onto the roll, thereby creating a significant record and increased awareness of the achievements and contributions of women in this state.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a program of public discussions, educational programs, resources and workshops that explore current and topical issues affecting women of all ages today.



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**Credits** 1. Susan Alberti 2. Peta Searle 3. Diane Wright 4. Val Lang, 5. Joan Kirner. Photo taken by Anthony Leong, Modform. Image by EMILY'S List Australia Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0 6. Paola Balla 7. Brigitte Muir 8. Halima Mohamed 9. Pat Bigham 10. Maisie Carr nee Fawcett.

## **SUSAN ALBERTI AC**

b. 1947

Susan Alberti is a businesswoman and a philanthropist who has been a major supporter of medical research, education and Australian Rules football. Alberti's involvement in the support of medical research began following the diagnosis and subsequent death of her only child, Danielle. She recently established the Susan Alberti Medical Research Foundation, which has raised millions of dollars for medical research. As a young girl, Alberti loved Australian Rules football and was devastated when she reached her teenage years and was no longer permitted to play. Her passion for the game has never left her and she has been a key figure in the establishment of the AFL Women's league after many years of supporting the Victorian Women's Football League. Alberti served four terms on the board of the Western Bulldogs Football Club and, along with president Peter Gordon, was instrumental in saving the club from financial ruin in the 1990s. She stepped down as vice-president after the Bulldogs' historic premiership win in 2016. Susan Alberti has received many honours, among them an honorary Doctor of Laws from Monash University in 2006 and an honorary Doctor of the University from Victoria University in 2016. These honours recognise her outstanding service to the community through her philanthropy and advocacy for medical research, education and sport. She is a Member of the Order of Australia, an Officer of the Order of Australia and a Companion of the Order of Australia. She was inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2014.

## **PAOLA BALLA**

b. 1974

Paola Balla is a Wemba-Wemba and Gunditjmara woman with Italian and Chinese heritage. She is an artist, curator, writer, educator and speaker whose projects engage with the complexities of race and identity in history as well as the impacts of racism in contemporary society. Balla has worked as a senior curator on the First Peoples exhibition at the Melbourne Museum. In 2010 she developed the Footscray Community Arts Centre's first Indigenous Cultural Program and curated the exhibition *Blak Side Story*, which won the ArtsHub Contribution to Community Development award in 2011. She was the curator of *Executed in Franklin Street* at the City Gallery in 2015-16 which was Highly Commended in the Australia and New Zealand Museums and Galleries Awards for Indigenous Projects. She is also the co-curator of *Sovereignty*, an exhibition of contemporary and historical works of art from First Nations peoples of south-east Australia at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art in 2017. Balla's own art practice is driven by concerns for social justice and addresses the impacts of colonial trauma, particularly on women and children. Her work is personal, drawn from her own experiences and that of her family, and in turn reflects upon the nature of Australian society and history. In 2011 and 2014 she won the Victorian Indigenous Art Award for Three Dimensional Works. Paola is a member of the Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit at Victoria University, where she is currently undertaking a Creative Thesis PhD as the inaugural Lisa Belleair Indigenous Research Scholar.

## **PAT BIGHAM AFSM**

b. 1947

Pat Bigham has been a passionate and committed volunteer at the CFA (Country Fire Authority) for nearly 40 years. When she joined the CFA she was one of the first female volunteers in her area; her district now has the highest number of female members in the state. A member of the Gruyere brigade in the Yarra Valley, Pat has served as a fire-

fighter, communications officer, radio operator, secretary and treasurer.

After the Ash Wednesday fires in 1983, Pat saw the need for firefighters and their families to have access to support in dealing with the traumatic events that they had experienced. Together with her colleagues she established a welfare program that is now known as the CFA's Peer Support Program. This program provides 'psychological first aid' through a network of firefighters supporting firefighters but which also provides access to professional counselling and financial assistance. Pat continues to be involved in the training of peer support workers for the program, which is now available in every CFA district throughout Victoria. In 2008 Pat was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in recognition of her outstanding service to her community, brigade and the CFA. She was recently made a Life Member of the CFA after serving for 35 years. On being inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in March 2017, Pat stated, 'To me, this is recognition of the CFA as a whole, and the people in CFA ... you don't do anything in the CFA as an individual, it's always teamwork.'

## **MAISIE CARR NEE FAWCETT**

1912-1988

Stella Grace Maisie Carr nee Fawcett was a botanist whose work with soil erosion revolutionised farming and grazing practices throughout Victoria's High Country. Born and raised in Footscray, she was a keen student and won scholarship places at Melbourne High School and the University of Melbourne. Fawcett's mentor, botany professor John Turner, recommended her for a position studying the effects of soil erosion in the Hume Reservoir catchment area. She lived on her own in Omeo and learnt to ride a horse so that she could go out with the farmers to view the soil conditions of the region. Known as 'The Washaway Woman' and 'The Woman from Pretty Valley', she proved that common farming and grazing practices were causing soil erosion and damage to water reservoirs in the High Country. She covered vast territories on horse-back and became an expert on the history and ecology of alpine Australia. By 1949, Fawcett was back at the University of Melbourne, where she was a much-loved and respected lecturer in the botany department. Frustrated by the limitations of existing texts, she oversaw the publication of *The Families and Genera of Victorian Plants*, which became a key textbook. Fawcett married fellow botanist Denis Carr in 1955. Together they travelled widely and worked in Belfast before moving to Canberra in 1967 to take up positions at the Australian National University. The University of Melbourne's Maisie Fawcett Scholarships and Monash University's D.J. and S.G.M. Carr Travelling Scholarships recognise her significant contribution to academic research.

## **JOAN KIRNER**

1938-2015

Joan Kirner was a passionate feminist, community activist and Labor politician who, in 1990, became Victoria's first, and to date only, female premier. Proud of her working-class origins, she credited her parents and grandparents with inspiring her community activism and labour politics. When her three young children were in school, she became actively involved in improving the education system for all children through her work with the Victorian Federation of State School Parents Clubs and the Australian Council of State School Organisations. Kirner entered state politics as Labor MLC for Melbourne West in 1982. She continued her strong support of state school education through the Disadvantaged Schools Program and the integration of children with disabilities within regular schools. She was also co-founder of Landcare, a

community-based movement working to care for the land. After leaving parliament in 1994, Kirner continued her activism in women's organisations such as EMILY's List Australia, which supports progressive women's pathways into parliament. Joan Kirner was inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2001. At the time of her death, Premier Daniel Andrews stated: 'She fought every day for fairness. Our state is stronger for her service and our lives are greater for her friendship. She was our first female premier and because of her work, she won't be the last.'

## **VAL LANG AM**

Val Lang is a farmer from the Lismore region and a dedicated supporter, leader and mentor of women in agriculture. A wool, cereal, legume and oilseed grower, she has contributed significantly to the rural women's movement since the 1980s. During childhood Val spent a lot of time outdoors and took a keen interest in farm life when holidaying with a school friend who lived on the land. She studied Agricultural Science at the University of Melbourne, at a time when few women were enrolled and when they were not permitted to undertake the practical components at Dookie, Longerenong or Marcus Oldham colleges. While on her husband's family farm she met a number of local women and began discussing needs for community education. With funding from a Rural Women's Access grant, they ran a range of workshops and programs and came into contact with Victoria's Rural Women's Network. The first Women on Farms Gathering was held in Gippsland in 1990 and Val soon became involved in organising the 1994 gathering at Glenormiston. After attending the International Rural Women's Conference in Melbourne that same year, she joined Australian Women in Agriculture, of which she was made a life member in 2015. She was a founding member of the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women and has served as its president. In 2007 Val Lang was made a Member of the Order of Australia 'for service to women living in rural and regional communities, particularly by improving social and economic conditions through the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women, and to the environment, health and education'.

## **HALIMA MOHAMED**

b. 1956

Halima Mohamed has been a community activist for nearly 30 years. Born in Somalia, she worked in parliament there for more than 10 years. In Australia, her work has been no less transformative. Mohamed's passion is in building and nurturing communities; whether that is breaking down historic boundaries among Somali women or forging relationships between refugees and non-refugees. She has led initiatives such as the African Women's Social Enterprise, in partnership with a number of organisations, before establishing Skilling Employment and Aid Enterprises Australia Inc. (SEAEA Inc.) in partnership with Green Collect in Yarraville. Mohamed has recruited a group of women to cook Somali and Western food for students at Kensington Primary School, a program that has resulted in better nutrition for students while deepening their understanding of Somali culture. It has also assisted the women to develop their English-language skills and to gain a sense of belonging within the community. Mohamed has established a sewing group for African women in Footscray. While sewing, the women learn English and hear talks from guest speakers on topics that assist them to gain employment, navigate cultural and bureaucratic differences or start their own businesses. Mohamed has also partnered with a range of organisations including the Brotherhood of St Laurence, who supported the creation of SEAEA Inc., AMES Australia, RMIT University,

the West Footscray, Rotary Club and the New Hope Foundation. She was inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2008.

## **BRIGITTE MUIR OAM**

b. 1958

Brigitte Muir is most famous for being the first Australian woman to reach the summit of Mt Everest. However she is also a documentary filmmaker, artist, writer and organiser of literacy and empowerment programs for women in Nepal. Born in Belgium, Brigitte's life changed after hearing a quote as a teenager from French writer Stendhal, which translates as: 'We must live our dreams, not dream our lives'. She soon discovered caving and later began walking and climbing in the Himalaya and elsewhere. Brigitte moved to Australia in 1983 and became an Australian citizen in 1987. She now lives in Natimuk near Mt Arapiles in the Wimmera. In 1988 Brigitte began a quest to climb the Seven Summits, the highest peaks on each of the seven continents. On her fourth attempt to climb Mt Everest, she reached her goal on 27 May 1997, becoming the first Australian woman to reach the summit of Everest and the first Australian to climb all seven peaks. She was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2000 and the Centenary Medal in 2001, the year in which she was also inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women. Brigitte returns regularly to Nepal where she leads community building and personal development treks for private groups. She also paints and writes and is making a documentary about learning to belong through experiencing life in a small subsistence farming village below the Everest area.

## **PETA SEARLE**

Peta Searle has played a significant role as an agent for change within Victoria's sporting community and is recognised for her advocacy for gender equality both on and off the field. For more than 20 years, Searle has been a leader in the involvement of women in Australian Rules football at both community and professional levels. In 2014 she was appointed as Development Coach at St Kilda Football Club, the first female coach in the AFL. Searle was previously coach of the Darebin Falcons in the Victorian Women's Football League. During her time as coach, the team won five consecutive premierships. Searle was the first female coach in the VFL. She was assistant coach to Gary Ayres at Port Melbourne and played a key role in their 2012 title defence. She has been head coach at the VFL Women's Academy and was head coach for the Western Bulldogs Women's team for the AFL's first exhibition match in 2013. Searle has demonstrated that women can coach male teams and she has paved the way for more women to lead in the development of men's as well as women's sports. She is a regular guest speaker at schools and events, inspiring women and girls to be involved in sport as players, coaches, managers and board members. Peta Searle was inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in March 2017.

## **DIANE WRIGHT**

b. 1953

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.*

Margaret Mead

The above quote by social anthropologist Margaret Mead has been a source of inspiration for Diane Wright. A resident of Colac with a background in palliative and bereavement care, Diane is the visionary and founder of both Anam Cara House Geelong and

Anam Cara House Colac. 'Anam Cara' is the Gaelic phrase for 'soul friend' and these two residential community hospices offer respite and end-of-life care in a 'home-like' environment for people with a chronic or life-limiting illness. The hospices were established after much community work and business support over a 12-year period, Anam Cara Geelong opening in 2007 and Anam Cara Colac in 2011.

In 2013 Diane Wright was inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women. She comes from a strong family tradition of community service and two of her relatives have also been inducted onto the Honour Roll: her great-great aunt Annette Bear-Crawford (1853-1899), who supported women's suffrage and was instrumental in the founding of the Queen Victoria Hospital, and her aunt Dr Joy Bear (b. 1927) who worked for 70 years as a senior research scientist with the CSIRO and who has been active in promoting science in schools.

# PUBLIC EVENTS, EDUCATION PROGRAMS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## **New Histories of Australian Rural and Regional Women: The Australian Women's Register and the Invisible Farmer Project Workshop**

Sunday 28 May, 2-4pm FREE

*The Invisible Farmer Project* is the largest ever study of Australian women on the land. Funded for three years (2017-19), the project involves a nation-wide partnership between rural communities, academics, government and cultural organisations. Feedback about the amazing farm women, past and present, who have made a difference to their communities is vital to the success of the project.

You can find out more about the project here:

<https://invisiblefarmer.net.au>

This workshop will help reveal 'hidden histories' and write tributes to women who should be recognised. By sharing stories, participants will give public recognition to the extraordinary, creative and vital roles that women have played in agriculture and farm communities across Australia. Participants will also give the project team the opportunity to potentially profile women's stories via future research and in-depth studies.

Come with the names and stories of women in the region who you would like acknowledged and we'll start sharing knowledge. Some of the women uncovered may be worthy of an Australian honour or induction onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women! Please bring along and share objects, ephemera, photographs or records on the day that you may have in your cupboards. They could be curated into a future exhibition!

## **Women's Network and Victorian Honour Roll of Women Event**

Thursday 15 June, 6-8pm FREE

Her Place Women's Museum Australia is keen to link in and engage with local women's organisations and individual women in order to discuss the plans for a vibrant physical space and online resource that will educate audiences and celebrate women's valuable and distinctive contributions, past, present and future.

Aligned closely with Her Place Museum's vision is the Victorian Honour Roll of Women. Established in 2001, the Honour Roll pays tribute to women who have been pioneers in their fields and who have improved the lives of women and the broader Victorian community.

Join us to learn more about the Victorian Honour Roll of Women and its nomination process and how you can become part of this exciting initiative. Also learn about the latest developments in the Victorian Government's plans to address family violence and gender equality.

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

### **Teacher Professional Development Teaching Gender Equality**

Monday 29 May, 5-7pm FREE

This program will be delivered by experienced teachers and will cover:

- Building a Feminist Collective at your school
- Getting a Gender Equality Policy in your Primary School: Why it's important and how to do it
- Respectful Relationships Education: Whole School Approach. What is DET doing?

The format of this session will be via interactive presentations and whole group discussion. The emphasis is on practical ideas that teachers can transfer and apply to their own schools. The aim is to provide local teachers with the skills to promote and implement gender equality initiatives within a whole school framework.

### **Education Guided Tours**

Mon 29 May, Tues 30 May, Tues 6 June, Wed 7 June, Tues 13 June and Wed 14 June

11am-12pm/2-3pm (60-minute session)

Class size: whole class / small groups

Her Place Education Guided Tours provide students and teachers with an overview of, and introduction to, Her Place Women's Museum Australia and its current exhibition *Her Place: Remarkable Women*.

The tour will offer a brief background on sexism and gender equality. Students and teachers will also be introduced to Primary and Secondary curriculum materials linked directly to the ten featured women.

Specific VicCurric links are listed on our website: [www.herplacemuseum.com/education/](http://www.herplacemuseum.com/education/)

If the Education Guided Tour times are unsuitable, teachers are welcome to guide their students through the exhibition independently. In these cases, Her Place Women's Museum can provide teachers with student resource materials to use throughout the visit.

For more information or to book, contact Kylie Oliver:

**E:** [kylie.lois.oliver@gmail.com](mailto:kylie.lois.oliver@gmail.com) **M:** 0411 585 744

## **EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

Her Place Museum Australia has engaging and wide-reaching educational resources, available to both primary and secondary students and teachers. These free classroom resources are intended to assist teachers to introduce and contextualise the stories of the Her Place exhibitions.

All lessons have been linked to the Victorian Curriculum to enable teachers to put them to their most effective use. **It is recommended that teachers use curriculum materials prior to visiting the exhibition.**

To access education resources:

[www.herplacemuseum.com/education/](http://www.herplacemuseum.com/education/)

To book visit:

[www.herplacemuseum.com/about/public-programs/](http://www.herplacemuseum.com/about/public-programs/)



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# WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA COPY

***Her Place: Remarkable Women* is an exhibition that honours the lives and contributions of women from across Victoria.**

**The third in a series of exhibitions presented by Her Place Women's Museum Australia, it celebrates their work, achievements and historical significance. Six of the women featured in the exhibition have been inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women. Established in 2001, the Honour Roll pays tribute to women who have been pioneers in their field and who have improved the lives of women and the broader Victorian community.**

**Her Place Women's Museum Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that celebrates the social, civic and entrepreneurial achievements of all Australian women and their role in shaping our nation.**

**Link to: [www.herplacemuseum.com/current-exhibitions-2](http://www.herplacemuseum.com/current-exhibitions-2)**



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**DIANE WRIGHT**



Proudly supported by the Victorian Government

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## POST 1

BRIGITTE MUIR OAM: Brigitte developed a passion for adventure as a teenager in Belgium. By adulthood she set on a quest to climb the highest mountain on each continent. Remarkably, she completed the 'Seven Summits' in 1997 when, on her fourth attempt, she became the first woman to scale Mt Everest. She is an inspirational speaker and community trek leader who lives near Mt Arapiles, in Western Victoria. Discover more about this adventurer.

Visit *Her Place: Remarkable Women* (24 May-18 June 2017), 95-97 Gellibrand St, Colac VIC.

Open Monday-Friday 8.30am-8pm. Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays 11am-8pm.

[www.herplacemuseum.com](http://www.herplacemuseum.com) #herplacemuseum

#womensmuseumnow

#womenpopupeverywhere



Image: Muir.jpg

## POST 2

EXHIBITION: Head over to COPACC and celebrate the achievements of women each who have contributed to making the world a more just and inclusive place.

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## POST 3

HER PLACE: REMARKABLE WOMEN Join in the dynamic program of events including "New Histories of Australian Rural and Regional Women: The Australian Women's Register and the Invisible Farmer Project Workshop" as part of *Her Place: Remarkable Women* (24 May-18 June 2017), 95-97 Gellibrand St, Colac VIC.

Open Monday-Friday 8.30am-8pm. Saturday, Sunday and public holidays 11am-8pm.

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