



# You

## Yarrunga Offerings & Updates

October 2025

### **Welcome to Term 4**

Wow, what a year it's been! This year has truly flown by – and what a huge year it has been for our Centre!

We began the year with the continued construction of our new deck and made several room adjustments to ensure programs could run smoothly with minimal noise and better access. A heartfelt thank you to everyone for your patience during this time – the result was absolutely worth the wait. The space looks stunning!

In June, we officially unveiled the new deck alongside Maroondah City Council, celebrating this beautiful addition to our Centre after receiving full compliance certification. It was a wonderful milestone and a proud moment for us all.

Since then, the deck has become a vibrant hub for a variety of events – from weddings and first birthdays to an Indigenous after-school program and, of course, our Coffee Hub. We love seeing it used and enjoyed by so many in our community.

As we look ahead to 2026, planning is already underway for another fantastic year. We're developing new programs and activities while continuing to focus on community events that foster connection and belonging. Keep an eye out for our course guide, newsletters, and posters promoting what's coming up. The committee and staff remain committed to keeping programs affordable and accessible for everyone.

I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of you for your continued support. Like many community houses, we face financial challenges, and your ongoing participation truly means the world to us.

A huge thank you also goes to our incredible tutors, facilitators, volunteers, and committee members who dedicate so much to the programs and activities you all enjoy. A special shout-out to Alanna Heitman, who leads our ever-popular Senior Strength and Balance program – demand for her sessions continues to grow, and we're excited to be adding even more in 2026.

To my amazing office team – Nadine, Jen, and our new volunteer Robyn – thank you for your hard work and dedication. It's been a huge year, and you've all gone above and beyond without any increase in hours. I couldn't do this without you!

And to our wonderful volunteers – Iwona and Glenn in the Coffee Hub, and Jenny who supports our events and food relief – your time, enthusiasm, and kindness make such a difference every week. We are deeply grateful for all you do.

This year has been incredibly busy and, at times, exhausting, but my heart has never been so full. Every person connected to our Centre – whether staff, committee member, volunteer, participant, hirer, or newcomer – contributes to making our community such a special place. Thank you all for being part of it.

As we approach the festive season, I want to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and holiday break, filled with joy, relaxation, and time spent with loved ones. We look forward to welcoming you back in 2026 for another year of friendship, connection, and wellbeing.

See you soon!

Sam Blackwell  
Centre Manager

## **DATES**

Term 4 runs until Thursday 18 December, closing to the public at 12 noon.

We will also be closed Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November for Cup Day.

Term 1 2026 will commence Tuesday 27 January.

Office re-opens to the public on Monday 19 January 2026.

## **Contents**

Dates  
People News  
Events, Activities, Programs & News  
To Make You Think  
PLAY - Planning for the Future

## PEOPLE NEWS

Ever wondered who is in our pool of wonderful tutors - wonder no more!

### **Senior Strength and Balance Team**

Our Senior Strength and Balance team, responsible for keeping you all fit and healthy, includes:

- Mary - who has been part of our team for a very long time, and teaches 1 class per week
- Alanna - currently takes 8 classes a week - phew!
- Marny - takes 2 classes per week
- Candace - our newest tutor also takes 2 classes per week


### **Other Exercise Tutors**

Our other exercise tutors include:

- Nancy - our Tai Chi tutor taking 2 sessions per week
- Judy - our night time Interval Training tutor

### **Adult Education Team**

Our Adult Education team includes:

- Kaye - our art tutor taking 2 classes of Explore Mixed Medium Art
  - Michelle - our computer tutor
  - Stephanie - leads our wonderful Winter Shelter teams
  - Nathan - our Barista King
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# EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS

## Yarrunga Coffee Hub

Our coffee hub is doing really well. We have regulars coming in after their classes and are also starting to draw people in off the street. Taking time out to chat with other people is such a positive and uplifting experience, and we can use all the positive experiences we can get at the moment.

Please support our Hub – it's a great way to catch up with your friends and class peers while supporting the Centre at the same time. Proceeds from coffee sales go mainly into paying for milk and beans. Any extra funds are currently being channelled back into the Hub buying things like serveware and signage.

Sitting on the deck with friends, cuppa in hand, and gazing at the wildlife on the lake is the best way to lower your stress levels!

Loyalty Cards now available  
- your 10<sup>th</sup> coffee free (regular size)



## EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

### Community Connection Morning Tea

All year we have been working to hold regular community events as we recognise the importance of connection and belonging to our wellbeing. Every term this year we have held a community connection morning tea and they are being very well attended. Serving up coffee from the Hub and a delicious morning tea it's a great way to spend an hour or two!

Big thanks to the volunteers who helped at our most recent event - Glenn and Iwona on coffee, Jenny on delicious Anzac slices, and Carys for room set up, food prep, service, clean up and being awesome!



### Blokes Banter and Brew

We also held our inaugural Blokes Banter and Brew morning tea which we hear was enjoyed by all.

Our next one will be held on Tuesday 18 November from 10am – 11.30am. Gold coin donation payable on the day. Bookings are essential – please contact the Centre.

It's a relaxed morning for men to kick back and share some good company and easy conversation. No fuss, no pressure.

In 2026 this will become a regular men's social group activity, held on the third Tuesday of the month, starting from 17 February. There will be a \$5 annual membership plus \$4 per visit which will include a Barista coffee and biscuits. If you are interested in joining this new group please contact the Office.

# EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

## Grant Updates

### DFFH – Food Relief Grant

So far, our Food Relief Grant from DFFH has been used to purchase vegepods, soil, and herbs to grow produce for our Winter Shelter community meals.



Our volunteer Janine (with the wonderfully green thumbs) has been growing up a storm. And our Winter Shelter volunteers have enjoyed being able to go out and pick fresh produce for the meals.

*From this ....*



*To this ....*



*To this ....*



# EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

## Maroondah City Council – Small Equipment Grant

You may have noticed our new “Coffee Hub Open” signage outside, along with café barriers that are stationed on the deck to restrict movement if classes are operating in other rooms.



We are hugely grateful to both Funders in supporting the work that we do that benefits the community.

# EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

## Fundraising

Our fundraising goes towards various programs in the Centre including Winter Shelter, and buying furniture/equipment for the Coffee Hub and deck.

### Tea Towels

We still have plenty of tea towels in the Hub available for purchase - \$10. They are quite large and will make nice stocking stuffers for Christmas!

### Bookmarks

Students from our art class have also made some beautiful bookmarks – each one is unique. There are also for sale in the Hub at \$2 each.

### Chocolates

Thank you to everyone who continues to support our chocolate sales.



# EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

## Free - Tech Help with Sam



Need some technical help? We have a wonderful volunteer, Sam, who can help you.

Sam can provide assistance with phones, laptops, computers, tablets and other tech devices like cameras. He can also help with hardware and software, browsing the internet safely and provide recommendations for safe computer programs.

Sam is available every Tuesday fortnight 10am – 12pm. Bookings are essential – contact reception.

## To make you think ....

The phrase “Don’t you dare” is actually the phrase “Do not you dare”.

Are you defending your beliefs  
- or defending your ego?

How often do you confuse familiarity’ with ‘truth’

How is it that ‘fat chance’ and ‘slim chance’ mean the same thing?

“Act naturally’. How can you act and be natural at the same time?

‘Sanction’ can mean ‘approve’ or ‘penalise’ - which is it?

Why does the pronunciation of the words  
‘through’, ‘though’, and ‘tough’ defy all logic?

## Escaping the Negative News

*It's hard to escape the news. Every day our phones, TVs, radios, and social media feeds seem to bring fresh stories of conflict, disasters, political upheaval, or personal tragedy. While staying informed is important, too much exposure to negative news can leave us feeling anxious, drained, and even hopeless. If you've been finding it difficult to cope with the constant flow of unsettling headlines, you're not alone. Here are some strategies that may help.*

### Be intentional about news consumption

- **Set time limits:** Instead of scrolling endlessly, choose specific times in the day when you'll check the news
- **Choose your sources wisely:** Stick to trusted, balanced outlets rather than sensationalist ones that thrive on alarm
- **Avoid doomscrolling:** If you notice yourself spiralling, pause and switch to something uplifting

### Balance negative with positive

- **Seek out good news:** Many outlets and websites are dedicated to stories of kindness, innovation, and hope
- **Look for solutions-focused journalism:** Articles that don't just highlight problems but also explore responses and progress which can give a greater sense of perspective
- **Celebrate local positives:** Notice and share the good happenings in your own community

### Take care of your emotional wellbeing

- **Limit exposure before bed:** Consuming heavy news late at night can affect your sleep and heighten stress
- **Practice mindfulness or relaxation techniques:** Breathing exercises, meditation, or even a short walk can reset your emotional state
- **Talk it out:** Share your feelings with friends, family, or support groups. Sometimes just naming your worry lessens its power

# PLAY cont.

## Focus on what you can control

Much of the news relates to events far outside our direct influence. Instead of feeling powerless, try asking: What is within my reach?

- **Get involved locally:** Volunteer or contribute to causes that matter to you
- **Make small changes:** Whether it's reducing waste, helping a neighbour, or supporting a charity, small actions counter the feeling of helplessness
- **Create healthy routines:** Sleep, exercise, and good nutrition build resilience in the face of stress

## Curate your digital environment

- **Mute or unfollow:** If certain accounts, chats, or websites constantly leave you feeling worse, it's okay to step back
- **Add uplifting content:** Balance your feed with humour, art, nature, or communities that inspire and uplift
- **Use "news-free" times:** Give yourself whole days or weekends without consuming the news

## Remember the bigger picture

Bad news 'sells' and is therefore designed to capture attention - that often means a focus on crises and conflict. But the world is also full of progress, kindness, and resilience. By putting boundaries around how much you consume and how you respond, you can protect your mental health without disconnecting completely.

## Final Thought

Staying informed doesn't have to mean being overwhelmed. Think of news consumption like nutrition: too much "junk" can harm you, but balanced, mindful choices can keep you strong. By protecting your mind and energy, you're better placed to support others and respond constructively to challenges.

