



February 2026

Welcome to Term 1

Welcome back for another year. We hope you were able to enjoy some well-deserved downtime over the break, as our team certainly did.

The year has started off very hot and the warm weather is likely to continue. Please remember to bring your water bottles and stay well hydrated when attending your program. All of our rooms are airconditioned to help keep you cool and comfortable.

A huge thank you to Jen, Nadine, Carys and our wonderful volunteers for holding down the fort while I am on leave. It has been an extremely busy time for them.

The coffee hub has reopened for the year and the team have been very busy preparing your favourite brews. If you haven't visited yet, please be sure to make some time - the coffee is fantastic and the cakes and slices are delicious. It's a great spot to catch up after your class or to bring along family and friends. Keep an eye out for our new page on our website, showcasing the menu and operating hours.

Facility hire for events is back at Yarrunga. We offer spaces for parties for ages between 0-12 years and 27+ (no hens or bucks parties). Hire of rooms 1, 2 and 3 on the lakeside includes access to the deck space, providing a beautiful area for guests to mingle and enjoy the views. Please contact the office for more information.

Here's to embracing the new year and all the new memories to come.

See you soon!

Sam Blackwell
Centre Manager

PEOPLE NEWS

Goodbyes

Judy - Judy has retired (again!). We hope she's trying to match John Farnham in comebacks as we have been unable to find a replacement tutor for her Interval Training class. Enjoy your retirement Judy, but please let us know if you change your mind.

Michelle - After many years with Yarrunga our computer tutor Michelle has resigned in order to take up another job. Michelle was very popular with her students and will be missed, but we wish her all the best in her new endeavours.

Welcomes

Beryl – Beryl has stepped into the role of tutor for our Practical Computer Skills class. We have had the pleasure of working with Beryl before when she ran a class on Canva for Small Business Owners and we are so glad she is available to come back on a more permanent basis. Welcome to the team.

Carmen – Carmen is the latest addition to our Committee of Governance. We certainly look forward to having Carmen on board and the all the knowledge and experience she will bring with her.

Effie – Effie has volunteered to run Mahjong at Yarrunga! A great game to challenge your brain and a chance to join another social group.

DATES

Term 1: 27 January to 2 April

Easter: 3 April to 6 April

Office Closed 13 April to 17 April

Term 2 commences: Monday 20 April

EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS

Yarrunga Coffee Hub

The Coffee Hub will be open for business 5 days a week – 9am until about 12.30pm. We can stay open longer for any lunchtime classes – just let us know.

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 10th coffee free (regular size)



EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

Senior's Core Strength and Balance

This is not an entirely new class ... more of a rebranding. The wonderful Candace has been taking this class as a Senior's Strength and Balance, but as a Pilates teacher she has been incorporating more core stability into her class so we decided to rebrand so that it more reflects the class content. This class run on a Wednesday at 12.45pm. As an off-shoot of our Senior's Strength and Balance class it will be offered at the same price. Please note there is no floor work in this class.

Functional Pilates

After a hiatus, Pilates is back at Yarrunga. Candace is taking this class on a Tuesday evening at 6.15pm. The class is aimed at strengthening your core, improving posture, and boosting mobility through targeted exercises designed to improve real-life movement.

Men's Banter and Brew

Last year we offered some trials for another men's social group, and this year will offer it as a regular social group activity. It will be held on the third Tuesday of the month from 10am – 11.30am. A great chance for a relaxed morning coffee and chat - just for men. Cost is \$5 annual fee plus \$4 per meeting.

Barista Skills

Want to make great coffee? Or to know the difference between a Piccolo and a Melbourne Magic? This program will help you brew your way to barista brilliance! Afterwards, you also get bragging rights to all your friends and family, and you can join our Coffee Hub volunteer team for some practice if you wish.

Tuesdays 17 and 24 February (you must attend both days)

9.30am – 12.30pm

Cost \$33



EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

Mahjong

Mahjong is coming to Yarrunga! It's a game that combines strategy, memory and a little luck. Played in small groups, it's a great way to keep your mind active while enjoying some good company and plenty of chat. No experience is needed and beginners are most welcome – rules will be explained step-by-step. So whether you're learning for the first time or brushing up your skills, come to our newest social group. Starts 17 February.

Tuesdays, 10am – 1pm. \$5 annual membership + \$4 per meeting.



Tech Help with Sam



Our wonderful volunteer, Sam, is back this year to assist with technical help.

Sam can assist 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.

Mindful Walking

Maroondah City Council are again running this highly successfully four week mindful walking program at Yarrunga Community Centre. Learn important mindful practices to help reduce stress and anxiety and improve mental health, sleep and overall mood.

Tuesdays from 3 March (4 weeks). 5.30pm - 6.30pm

\$30 for the full program - bookings essential

www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Mindfulwalking or email fiona.burridge@maroondah.vic.gov.au

EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

Slow Fashion

Join Maroondah City Council's Waste Educator to share ideas on reducing clothing waste. Explore sustainable shopping, how to care for your clothes so they last longer, and what to do with textiles when you have finished with them.

Tuesday 17 February, 1pm – 2.30pm

Cost – free



Grandparent and Grandchild Creative Crafting



A wonderful opportunity to do something creative and fun with your grandchild (aged 3 – 5 years), whilst also helping them develop problem-solving and concentration skills.

Tuesdays 10, 17, 24 Feb and 3 March.

10am – 11.15am

\$120 per child including all materials

For bookings contact Kay on 0400 089 146 or hello@uniquelydesigned.com.au

Neighbour Day Morning Tea

Tuesday 24 March

10am

Come and share some great company and a yummy morning tea.

Please RSVP by Monday 16 March for catering purposes.

AGM

Wednesday 8 April

10am

A recap of our 2025 year

RSVP by Tuesday 31 March for catering purposes.

EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

Grant Updates

Bendigo Bank - Cups of Connection Partnership Program

This program aims to promote sustainability, local training and community collaboration through the use of reusable double-walled cork takeaway coffee cups. The cups will feature the logos of Yarrunga, **Bendigo Bank** and ALT T Coffee - celebrating a shared commitment to social impact.

Yarrunga will provide the training hub and space for hands-on barista training in its new cafe hub, helping participants gain real real-world skills. ALT T will supply affordable, sustainable coffee and expertise through training. **Bendigo Bank, as a valued sponsor will help fund the production of the eco-friendly cups, reinforcing its investment in community development and environmental responsibility.**

These cups will be ordered shortly - so keep your eye out for our Cup Launch event.



 **Bendigo Bank**

Community Bank
Ringwood East and
Croydon

EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND NEWS cont.

Fundraising

Our fundraising goes towards various programs in the Centre including Winter Shelter, buying furniture/equipment for the Coffee Hub and deck, and seeds, potting mix and compost for our vegepods.

Tea Towels

We still have plenty of nice large tea towels in the Hub available for purchase - \$10.

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.

Mugs

Just a few handpainted mugs are still available at \$5 each.

Chocolates

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

Phonetic is not

“Abbreviation”: is 12 letters long

“Thesaurus” doesn't have a synonym

“Monosyllabic” has five syllables

Say what you will about English,
but it has a sense of humor!

The Value of Intergenerational Relationships



One of the quiet gifts of getting older is perspective. With years behind us, we've seen trends come and go, learnt a few lessons the hard way, and discovered what really matters. But while age brings wisdom, it doesn't mean we have to live in an age bubble. In fact, some of the most rewarding relationships in later life are those that span generations.

Intergenerational relationships – connections between older and younger people – can be deeply enriching for everyone involved. They don't have to be formal or complicated. They might be chats with grandchildren, conversations with younger neighbours, volunteering alongside students, or simply sharing a laugh with a child at the bus stop.

For older people, these relationships can bring energy and a sense of relevance. Younger people often see the world differently. They introduce new ideas, new language, and sometimes new technology - whether we asked for it or not! Staying connected across generations can help us feel engaged with the present, rather than watching it pass by from the sidelines.

PLAY cont.

There's also a strong sense of purpose that comes from being needed. Younger people benefit enormously from the experience, patience, and reassurance older adults can offer. A listening ear, a calm perspective, or a simple "you'll be okay" can mean more than we realise. Many of us underestimate how valuable our life experience is – until someone younger seeks it out.

Of course, the learning goes both ways. Intergenerational relationships remind us that we don't stop growing just because we've reached a certain age. Younger people often encourage us to try new things, whether that's a different way of communicating, a new hobby, or seeing familiar issues through fresh eyes. These exchanges can challenge stereotypes on both sides and replace assumptions with understanding.

There's also a strong wellbeing benefit. Research consistently shows that social connection supports mental and emotional health, and relationships across age groups can reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation. A friendly chat, shared activity, or regular catch-up can become something to look forward to – a bright spot in the week.

Importantly, these relationships don't require us to "keep up" or pretend to be someone we're not. The most meaningful connections come from simply being ourselves. Younger people aren't looking for perfection; they're looking for authenticity. Sharing stories, mistakes, humour, and everyday experiences is often what creates real bonds.

Intergenerational relationships can happen naturally if we allow space for them. Community Centres, libraries, Neighbourhood Houses, schools, volunteering programs, and even local cafés can all be places where generations mix. Sometimes it just takes a smile, a question, or a willingness to listen.

In a world that often feels divided by age, building connections across generations is a quiet act of optimism. It reminds us that we are all part of a bigger story – one that is richer when shared. At any age, there's value in being both a learner and a teacher, and intergenerational relationships give us the chance to be a little bit of both.

Here are three easy, low-pressure activities that naturally foster intergenerational relationships. They're practical, realistic, and well suited to older people – no special skills or big commitments required.

1. Shared Storytelling (formal or informal)

Simply sharing stories is one of the easiest and most powerful ways to connect across generations. This might happen with grandchildren, younger neighbours, students, or volunteers.

It can be as simple as talking about what school was like "back then," first jobs, favourite games, or how the neighbourhood has changed. Younger people are often fascinated by everyday life stories – not just big historical moments.

PLAY cont.

Why it works: Stories build understanding, validate life experience, and invite curiosity on both sides. They also allow older people to contribute without feeling they have to “teach” or perform.

2. Doing Something Side by Side

Activities work best when the focus isn't on conversation alone. Cooking together, gardening, walking, craft, puzzles, or helping with a small task creates natural moments to talk without pressure. For example, a shared walk with a younger friend or family member, baking with a child, or volunteering at a community event brings generations together with a common purpose.

Why it works: Side-by-side activities feel relaxed and equal. They remove awkwardness and allow relationships to grow organically.

3. Skill Swapping (Keep It Simple)

Intergenerational connection thrives when learning goes both ways. One person might share practical skills – cooking, repairing, budgeting, sewing – while the other helps with technology, apps, or new ideas. This doesn't need to be formal or structured. A quick “Can you show me how to do this?” or “I can show you a trick I use” is often enough to open the door.

Why it works: Skill swapping builds mutual respect and reminds everyone that each generation has something valuable to offer.

In the end, it's not about grand programs or perfect conversations. Intergenerational relationships grow through simple moments, shared time, and genuine interest. A little openness goes a long way – and the benefits are felt on both sides.

See details of the Grandparent and Grandchild Creative Crafting activity for a great way to get started on building these quality experiences and relationships.

