



## WELCOME

A wintry welcome to the latest edition of the VWT newsletter! So much has happened in the past 6 months, a new Sub-Fund, two book releases, a new appointment to the VWT Board & much much more. Thank you all for your support of our Pozible campaign for *About Bloody Time: the Menstrual Revolution We Have to Have*, we're overwhelmed with the success of the campaign and so excited for it to be out in the world. Enjoy!

## ABOUT BLOODY TIME IS LAUNCHED: PERIOD.

Our new book, *About Bloody Time: the Menstrual Revolution We Have to Have*, written by Karen Pickering (feminist organiser) and Jane Bennett (menstrual educator) has officially been launched through a series of community events around the state of Victoria.

The first book launch took place on Wednesday 5 June at the Church of All Nations in Carlton in front of an audience of over 200 people. Held in partnership with the Readings Foundation, this event marked the end of a highly successful six week Pozible campaign to fund the publication of *About Bloody Time*.

Thanks to the support of like-minded members of the community, our crowdfunding campaign raised a total of \$31,327 — more than double the original target.

The Carlton launch also signalled the end of many years of research and writing. During this period (pun intended) the Trust surveyed almost 3,500 women and girls about their experiences of menstruation and menopause. The goal was to uncover the many permutations of the menstrual taboo; the ways period stigma affected people's lives; and how we may better support those who menstruate. This research process began in 2013 and in the years that followed, authors Karen Pickering and Jane Bennett wrestled with the emerging data and what those findings meant for society at large.

*About Bloody Time* unpacks these findings in detail, asking key questions like what would make their period easier and how prepared they were for their first period. Shockingly, the meter hasn't shifted much over the last fifty years, as over half of the women surveyed (ranging in age from 12 to 46 years) felt unprepared for their

[READ MORE page 2](#)



Top Image: *About Bloody Time* co-authors Karen Pickering and Jane Bennett at the Carlton after-party Right Images (top to bottom): Clementine Ford speaking to the crowd at the Carlton Launch; Co-author Jane Bennett with daughter Freya; Rosie volunteers Sanduni Sithara Hewa Katupothage and Alice Chambers (Photo Credit: Breeana Dunbar Photography)





#### From page 1

first period and 42 per cent of those surveyed, in all age groups, either ‘disliked everything’ about periods.

Throughout the evening, Mary paid homage to members of the original Advisory Group who were instrumental in bringing *About Bloody Time* to fruition such as Katherine Cunningham (Living Gently); Jane Hardwicke Collings (School of Shamanic Womancraft); Duré Dara OAM (Board Member, Victorian Women’s Trust), and especially Belinda (Bindy) Gross, our inaugural donor.

The night ended with round after round of thunderous applause as Mary also gave thanks to all 675

supporters of our Pozible campaign, as well as TOM Organic; School of Shamanic Womancraft; the Vasudhara Foundation; Heimot Cayuse; and Plan International Australia; without whom this book would not have been possible.

**“The baby with many mothers. This book is a labour of love.”**

Mary also thanked the strong creative team behind the book, including illustrators Alice Lindstrom, Michelle Pereira, Lucy Fahey; our printer, Anthony Pezzano of The Print Department; and Aimee Carruthers, *About Bloody Time* book

designer.

“The baby with many mothers. This book is a labour of love,” said Karen. Following the Carlton event, a further three book launches were held in Ballarat, Bendigo, and Castlemaine. The latter was also sell-out event, proving that people in the city and regional communities are more than ready for a menstrual revolution. Our task now is to ripple out this document so that it can have important social change for women and girls, lets start the revolution!

**Buy now:** [vwt.org.au/shop](http://vwt.org.au/shop)

Left Image: Chris Gordon and Karen Pickering  
Middle Image: About Bloody Time: The Menstrual Revolution We Have to Have Right Image: Duré Dara (Photo Credit: Breeana Dunbar Photography)



WELCOME

## Nadina Brockhurst

By Esther Davies-Brown, VWT Project Officer

**We recently welcomed Nadina Brockhurst to the Victorian Women’s Trust Board.**

Nadina works as a Finance Analyst for energy multinational BP and in her spare time volunteers for AIME (Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience). We are thrilled to have her with us at the Trust. Esther, Trust Project Officer, chatted with Nadina about what this new role means for her.

**How did the appointment on VWT Board come about?**

I’ve always been involved in not-for-profits and volunteered in some way at every stage of my life. Whether that was volunteering at outreach programs for prisons and youth justice, working with Indigenous companies, small corporations or small not-for-profits helping them get off the ground, get compliant and get on top of it.

But then there was a point a few years ago where I started thinking about how I could do more than volunteering, and do things at a higher level and make more systematic change. I wanted to be able to leverage the kind of corporate experience I have, use my training, my education, my experience both as a woman, as a minority, as all of those things, and look at systemic change on a larger scale. When I moved to Victoria I applied for the scholarship with Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet, to do the company directors program. There are a lot of people making ridiculous amounts of change

working at organisations, working at not-for-profits - your entire team for example - all that stuff doesn’t happen without your team. But I don’t work at a not-for-profit, so how can I help and give back. At the end of last year I applied to the Observership Program, and through doing that the position on the VWT Board came about.

**What does gender equality and feminism mean to you?**

We need to be able to celebrate the contribution of women and girls in all the spaces they’ve operate in and value all the things that they do and have done. People want me to answer this question because I’m Indigenous and it’s like what, gender equality just is, it needs to be.

**Esther: Could you tell me a bit about your background in finance?**

Nadina: It’s a bit of a mixed bag actually. I started out studying and working full time at the same time. I studied law and accounting at University - A Bachelor of Law and Bachelor of Commerce with an Accounting major.

My first corporate experience was working at Australia Post while I studied, which included working in corporate arms and performance contract in retail, so working with customers and customer facing community. While I was at Australia Post I also did internships with Indigenous Health, worked organising event management and in Indigenous regional, rural and remote health, and tutored too.

And now my main career areas, are in the community space and in finance. In the community space I run an Indigenous Native Title Trust. I also do volunteer work in corporates with Indigenous businesses to get them up and running. In the finance and compliance space, I work for the internal control arm of BP. I’ve moved a little bit back towards sales now, but my history has been in contracts compliance with financial planning.

**What are you looking forward to about being on the Trust Board?**

I really do like the things the Trust, as a whole, the entire organisation, manages to do. The space they play in, the activities they deliver. Even things like respect for young women or the books that get launched. I’m pretty passionate about the things that the Trust does and the cause that they support. Being able to contribute to that, and be involved is pretty rad.

It’s time for us to say goodbye to Azmeena Hussain, who has reluctantly stepped down from the VWT Board due to new work commitments. Azmeena was recently made a Principal at Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, having worked there for over 8 years, specialising in the WorkCover department. Azmeena acts for clients who have suffered an injury, illness or disease arising out of, or in the course of their employment.

From all of us at the Trust, huge congratulations Azmeena, on your wonderful achievement and we wish you all the best in the future!

Top Image: Nadina Brockhurst (Photo supplied)



## 2019 SMALL GRANTS

### SAFETY FOR WOMEN & GIRLS

This year we committed our entire Small Grants Program towards safety for women and girls. Our grant recipients estimate that through our grants, we are collectively helping just over 8,000 women to access essential programs, resources and services. This is all thanks to our kind donors and funding partners.

Through our grants, we were particularly keen to support projects that work with people from Aboriginal communities; CALD communities; LGBTIQA communities; as well as older Victorians; and Victorians with a disability and/or mental illness.

We know from experience that our investment will make a real difference. Since opening our doors in 1985, we have funded close to \$3 million in circuit-breaking projects that improve safety and support a countless number of victim/survivors. Projects like these make up the largest proportion of our funding, and we will continue to support safer communities through our progressive grant making.

We would like to extend a special thanks to all our donors and Grosvenor Foundation, Bokhara

Foundation, Private Trust, Sandra Hart and Anne Miller. The level of support this year reinforces that if we stand together, we can make gender equality a reality.

#### Anglicare Victoria

*Conversational English in Your Community*  
\$9895

This course has been created for recently arrived migrant, refugee and asylum seeker women to increase their knowledge, confidence and skills to prepare and respond to emergency situations, whilst increasing their proficiency in English. The women will gain trust in the role first responder emergency services perform, such as police, fire and ambulance and increase their safety.

#### Birth for Humankind

*Safer Beginnings: Supportive positive birth and early parenting experiences for socially isolated new mothers*  
\$9834

This project will support 24 socially isolated Melbourne women (through pregnancy, birth and early parenting) who are experiencing family violence, abuse and/or trauma. Birth for Humankind will deliver professional development training to 25 trained volunteer birth support workers in responding to family violence contexts. The project will support stronger relationships between

maternal health and family violence sector service providers.

*A special thank you to the Bokhara Foundation for supporting the project.*

#### Berry Street

*What Nobody Talks About: How to Live Life After Sexual Assault and Violence*  
\$9950

This documentary film will explore the ways women and girls have found ways to navigate life after experiences of sexual assault and violence. The film will raise awareness among the broader community about the long-term impacts of sexual assault and violence and offer other survivors of sexual assault and violence hope and inspiration for how they might start to recover and move forward.

#### Women's Information, Support and Housing in the North (WISHIN)

*Capability building workshops for women experiencing violence*  
\$10,000

This series of workshops help with practical tips and build capability for women experiencing violence. The workshops will enable women to navigate different government agencies that can help to unlock their assets and develop long-term financial security as they work towards maintaining employment. Gaining economic independence will enable these women to make a planned

and considered exit from a violent relationship, stay connected to their communities and build a stable future for themselves and their children.

*A special thanks to Anne Miller for supporting this project.*

#### Eastern Community Legal Centre

*E-GOALS*  
\$10,000

The E-GOALS project will help to build the Eastern Community Legal Centre's (ECLC) staff capacity to better identify, understand and respond to the legal needs of women experiencing, or at risk of, family violence. This will be achieved through a partnership between ECLC and Glen Park Community Centre (GPCC).

*A special thank you to a Private Trust for supporting this project.*

#### Good Samaritan Inn

*Family Violence Resilience Support worker*  
\$10,000

This grant will enable Good Samaritan Inn to pilot a weekend Family Violence Resilience Worker at the GSI Crisis Accommodation Service. The FV Resilience Worker will provide emotional and psychological support, and safety planning to women and children who are experiencing family violence. The dedicated FV Resilience Worker's aim is to assist women to achieve independence, achieve their own goals while focusing on their self-care, resilience, strengths and abilities.

*A special thanks to Grosvenor Foundation for supporting this project.*

#### Women with Disabilities Victoria

*Our Right to Safety and Respect*  
\$10,000

Women with Disabilities Victoria recognises that resources about violence and abuse for women with disabilities must be inclusive, relevant and available in a range of formats. This project will produce an audio described and a braille version of 'Our Right to Safety and Respect: A video resource developed by and for women with disabilities about violence, abuse, safety and respect'. Both versions of the guide will be made available to women within Victoria who identify with having a vision impairment, are blind and/or deaf/blind.

*A special thank you to a Private Trust for supporting this project.*

#### Barwon Child Youth and Family (Colac Gathering Place)

*It's All About Me!*  
\$8470

*It's All About Me!* is a series of Aboriginal artist-led visual art workshops for Aboriginal girls and their mothers/significant others to enhance their connection to community and enable them to feel culturally safe. The artwork will be displayed as part of the Colac Otway Arts Trail.

#### Shifra

*Improving access to maternity services for families from low literate, non-English speaking backgrounds*  
\$10,000

This project is part of a larger effort to replicate Shifra's English/Arabic web-app into four subsequent languages (Mandarin, Dari, Vietnamese and Hindi). Shifra will develop online audio and visual resources in multiple languages that are easily accessible to women regardless of their level of written or spoken literacy. These resources will increase the knowledge of women from low literate, non-English speaking backgrounds who struggle to access and navigate Australia's maternal health services.

*A special thank you to the Bokhara Foundation for supporting the project.*

#### Switchboard Victoria

*LGBTIQ Older Women Out & About*  
\$10,000

This project will build connections and overcome the isolation older LGBTIQ women and non-binary people (LGBTIQ-W&NB) experience. Working with three Victorian communities, the project will create safe, accessible opportunities for LGBTIQ-W&NB people (50+) to come together, celebrate their diversity and strengths, and find friendship and support. These events will provide a relaxed, welcoming environment in which they will meet, have fun, and access information that will reduce risks to their safety and address barriers to inclusion. Volunteers will provide peer support and intergenerational connection.

*A special thanks to Grosvenor Foundation and Sandra Hart for helping support this project.*

#### Wellsprings for Women

*Standing With You*  
\$10,000

The *Standing With You* project will give migrant and refugee women a better understanding of family violence and its causes. The project will explore root causes, social norms, and behaviours that contribute to family violence. The women will have the tools to support other women in their respective communities who are at risk of family violence.

*A special thank you to the Bokhara Foundation for supporting the project.*

#### THE FAMILY VIOLENCE PHILANTHROPY COLLABORATION PROJECT

The Victorian Women's Trust has been participating in a unique philanthropic collaboration project to build the capacity of the family violence sector in Victoria.

Led by Domestic Violence Victoria, the cross-sector collaboration is focused on supporting the implementation of the Royal Commission Recommendations. A range of strategic areas for philanthropic investment have been identified, and a group of philanthropic funders have come together to resource these areas, including Gandel Philanthropy, The William Buckland Foundation, Give Where You Live Foundation, State Trustees Australia Foundation, The Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust and sub-funds of the Australian Communities Foundation.

Thanks to the generous support of the Eirene Lucas Foundation, Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust is proud to be supporting Increasing Inclusion and Accessibility for Victim Survivors and Families in Refuge - Implementing a Service Model for Family Violence Refuges State-wide to be delivered by Domestic Violence Victoria in partnership with Family Safety Victoria.

This project will support family violence refuges across Victoria, who provide protection and safety for adults and children fleeing family violence, to increase inclusion and accessibility for all Victorians, and incorporate the Recommendations from the Royal Commission into their work.

Left Page: Edmund Rice Community and Refugee Services, Prue Myer Sub-Fund recipient (Breeana Dunbar Photography)



Left Page (clockwise): Jill Gallagher AO (Photo by Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission); Maddy Crehan and Sophie Bliss; African Family Services Staff (Breeana Dunbar Photography). Right Page: Sue Peterson with her late partner Jan Webster (Image supplied)



**“When you look around the planet, we are the only Commonwealth country that does not have treaties with its first people. Surely we’re all ashamed of that.”**

**- JILL GALLAGHER AO**  
**Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner**

### TREATY. IT’S TIME.

On June 18, the VWT and Koorie Women Mean Business (KWMB) held an important conversation about Treaty for First Nations Peoples in Victoria.

Leanne Miller, proud woman of the Dhulanyagen Ulupna Clan, Yorta Yorta nation and Executive Director of KWMB, Michelle Isles, Co-Chair, Reconciliation Victoria and Jill Gallagher AO, Gunditjmara woman and Commissioner of the Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission, talked about the process, what treaty looks like, and what it means for Victorians.

**If you would like to read the event wrap up, head to:** [vwt.org.au/a-conversation-with-jill-gallagher-treaty-for-victoria/](http://vwt.org.au/a-conversation-with-jill-gallagher-treaty-for-victoria/)

For more information on the work Jill Gallagher AO and the Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission are doing call 1800 TREATY (1800 873 289) or visit: [firstpeoplesvic.org](http://firstpeoplesvic.org)

### AFRICAN FAMILY SERVICES



Congratulations to African Family Services (AFS)! A recent grant from the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) enables them to

run their Train the Trainer Project: Building the Capacity of African Australian Community Leaders program. The DPC was offering a number of grants to organisations representing African communities through the 2018-20 Capacity building and participation (CBP) program, family violence stream. African Family Services are over two years into their incubation period at the Victorian Women’s Trust, and we are excited to watch their organisation go from strength to strength.

**If you haven’t heard of AFS or are wanting to find out more, you can head to their new website at:** [africanfamilyservices.org.au/](http://africanfamilyservices.org.au/)

### NEW BOOK ESSAYS ON 80 HAS BEEN LAUNCHED

We were delighted to launch our book *Essays on Eighty* earlier this year, a book that presents the accounts of seven remarkable women over 80 who have contributed significantly to Australian life in different ways. Written by VWT volunteer Susan Powell and designed by staff member Janya Clemens, a power of work has gone into bringing *Essays on Eighty* book to life.

Contributors, their families, staff and supporters congregated at the Welsh Church to celebrate the release. We are proud to place their stories on the public record.

If you’re interested in purchasing a copy of *Essays on Eighty* (\$25.00) give us a call on 9642 0422 or email [women@vwt.org.au](mailto:women@vwt.org.au)

### CHANGES FOR TEAM ROSIE!



Trust staff have said goodbye to Maddy Crehan, Project Officer for Rosie after her time here for just over three and a half years! Maddy is currently completing postgraduate study in Writing and Editing at RMIT and has decided to focus on her studies. We wish you all the best with your writing Maddy, and know you won’t be a stranger. We are happy to announce that Sophie Bliss will be taking over the role of Rosie Project Officer. Sophie is eager to take on this new position and work with our amazing team of Rosie volunteers.

**Check out some of the latest blogs on the Rosie website:** [rosie.org.au/home/blog/](http://rosie.org.au/home/blog/)

### CONGRATULATIONS ISABELLE HUGHES

One of our rolled gold volunteers Isabelle Hughes is jetsetting off after volunteering at the VWT for 18 months. Isabelle has worked for some time on great circuit breaking research around Equal Representation along with Mary Crooks AO. We congratulate Isabelle on starting her new role at Management Consulting Company, Mckinsey at the start of next year.



### We’re are excited to announce a new Sub-Fund.

The new Sub-Fund will support women exiting prison; educational and leadership opportunities for Aboriginal women; and pathways for women out of homelessness.

Social justice was always a motivator for Jan and Sue throughout their long and loving relationship. Their shared experiences only made them more passionate about giving back and putting in the hard yards for equality.

They met back in 1988 when Jan was visiting a dear friend dying from AIDS, who was being looked after in hospital where Sue was nursing. “Jan would visit, and I saw her coming in all the time,” recalls Sue. “I called her into my office and asked if she was OK. She said that was when she fell in love with me. I didn’t notice anything. Then she left flowers on my doorstep following a visit to my home for coffee.”

Jan was the outspoken one whereas Sue was quiet, but both were feminists who embraced true equality.

“Jan was her own woman,” says Sue. If she heard someone make an unfounded comment, “She would have fifty-four questions and ask, ‘What evidence have you got?’ I

would listen and Jan would ask me later did I think she was reasonable questioning the person? I would say, I probably wouldn’t challenge the person the way she had done. In that sense, we were opposites. But she respected me, and I respected her.” In her work as a community health and respiratory nurse, Sue saw firsthand the importance of showing empathy to people in crisis, realising that everyone has a backstory that underpins their current circumstances.

**“We’ve always wanted to leave whatever we’ve got to marginalised women, and we feel our families are quite comfortable.”**

“Working in community health I’ve known a lot of marginalised people,” says Sue. “Some of them are dealing with dual diagnosis, mental health, homelessness and so on. I see them as equal, but they often feel that they’re inferior. People fear not being accepted and they already have a barrier up. They’ve probably been hurt so many times, so they fear rejection continually.”

Jan and Sue’s life experiences often reminded them to count their blessings and to give back to the

community where they could. Sue explains, “we’ve always wanted to leave whatever we’ve got to marginalised women, and we feel our families are quite comfortable. We’d love to have millions and millions of dollars to change the world.”

Shortly after Jan’s death in 2018, Sue put in motion their wish to share their good fortune with others who deserve the chance to turn things around and called the Victorian Women’s Trust to find out how to set up a Sub-Fund of their own.

“Jan was always feminist. She was a member of the Victorian Women’s Trust for a substantial period of time,” says Sue. “Jan had heard Mary Crooks speak many times, and always spoke highly of her and the Trust’s work in supporting marginalised women.”

The Jan Webster and Sue Peterson Sub-Fund will respect both women’s wishes to create a legacy that will, as Sue notes, “touch many lives” with a special focus on women — neatly dovetailing with the aims of the Victorian Women’s Trust, an organisation Jan loved.

**If you would like to make a donation to the Jan Webster and Sue Peterson Sub-Fund, head to:** [vwt.org.au/donate/](http://vwt.org.au/donate/)





\$30

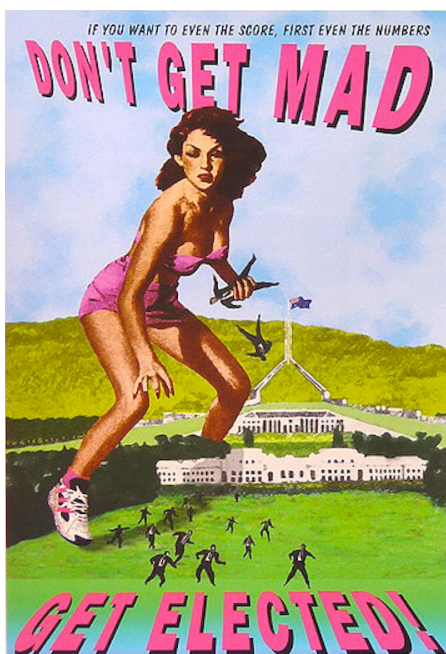
excl. postage

## About Bloody Time: The Menstrual Revolution We Have to Have

How bloody exciting!

Co-written by Karen Pickering (feminist organiser) and Jane Bennett (menstrual educator) this book digs deep into the menstrual taboo: where it exists, how it came to be and why it's so resilient. Our culture asks women and girls to view their bodies through a prism of negativity and fear. We want to change that.

Available now! Head to: [vwt.org.au/shop](http://vwt.org.au/shop)



\$20 incl. postage

Get Elected! A2 Poster by Carol Porter

It's the poster that's been firing women up on all sides of politics. Would suit a bedroom, boardroom or any room you like. Remember, don't get mad, get elected!



\$35 excl. postage

Frances Cannon x VWT Tote Bag

Created by local artist, Frances Cannon, featuring an illustration that celebrates the power of feminist friendship. Stocks are dwindling, so snap one up while you still can.

**Interested in getting About Bloody Time stocked in a bookshop near you?**

Call us on 9642 0422 or send an email to [women@vwt.org.au](mailto:women@vwt.org.au)

**"ABOUT BLOODY TIME should be on bookshelves everywhere: I only wish it had been on mine when I was younger."**

**- CLEMENTINE FORD**