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Welcome to the Autumn edition of the New Hope Migrant & Refugee Centre and The New Hope Foundation Newsletter.

MULTICULTURAL WOMEN'S DAY

On Tuesday 20th March, as part of International Women's Day celebrations, a Multicultural Women's Day was held at the Prahran Town Hall.



The event brought together approximately 200 women from a range of cultural and language backgrounds to celebrate and recognise the strength, courage and resilience of women migrating to Australia.

The event was opened by the City of Stonnington Mayor, Cr John Chandler and the City of Port Phillip Mayor, Cr Janet Bolitho, followed by guest speakers, writer and employment lawyer Alice Pung and settlement worker Mary Riek.

Both speakers inspired us by generously sharing with the audience their own journey and experiences, strongly echoing the experiences of many of the migrant women attending.

Alice said the day for her was about "celebrating the achievements of migrant working class women who have made silent contributions and sacrifices so that the next generation of women will have a better existence".

Mary said "there were only a few Sudanese families when I arrived in Australia. Women felt isolated not knowing where to get help and support. It was very important for us to meet other women in the same situation". In order to settle in the new country more effectively, opportunities for connecting with the community are paramount.

The entertainment provided ensured the event was lively with many of the participants joining in dancing to the tune of country music and singing with the Russian Women's Ensemble 'Nostalgia'.

Over lunch, the women were entertained by the graceful and colourful Chinese Women's Fan Group.



Women attending were also encouraged to become involved in a number of activities

ranging from gentle exercises, henna painting, Chinese calligraphy, chai tea tasting and hand- massages.

All involved in the celebration had a wonderful day and have requested a similar event for next year.

This day was supported and funded by the Cities of Port Phillip and Stonnington, Victorian Multicultural Commission, Inner South Community Health Service and the New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre

AGED SERVICES

On Saturday 17th March, the 3rd Annual Multicultural Senior Citizens festival took place at the Moorleigh Community Village. The New Hope Migrant & Refugee Centre, which has the responsibility of co-ordinating activities and programs at the centre, in partnership with the CALD groups that call the centre home, organized a very successful and entertaining event.

The festival was one of many celebrations held around Victoria during Harmony week 17th –23rd March, and its aim was to celebrate the Multicultural essence of our society by bringing together senior citizens from different Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and through traditional dance, song, food, and cultural displays to strengthen the Multicultural identity of Melbourne.

Fifteen CALD senior citizens groups that access the Moorleigh Community Centre participated on the day and each of them contributed in their own unique way to the success of the festival.



Dancing groups and choirs from Latin America, Italy, Russia, Greece, Bangladesh,

and the Cook Islands presented a very exciting and colorful program mesmerizing participants till the end of the day.



The Mayor of Glen Eira, Cr Margaret Esakoff officially opened the festival and in her speech paid tribute to the event as a necessary tool in the preservation of cultural traditions and practices.

The Victorian Multicultural Commissioner, Mr George Lekakis also talked about the work of the Commission (VMC) in the development and preservation of cultural identity in Victoria.

One significant occasion that made the festival ever so important for the Bentleigh area was the launching of the Public Internet Access Program (PIAP). The Parliamentary Secretary of the Department of Victorian Communities, Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio launched the project and urged all senior citizens from CALD and Non-CALD backgrounds in the area to access the free service at the centre, and make the most of the opportunity to open up new pathways of communication and knowledge.

To compliment the launch of the program, the Hon. Rob Hudson, member for Bentleigh has contributed funds for the purchase of a printer/copier that would service the senior groups at the centre to meet their administration needs as much as access information from the Internet.

The festival has created a wonderful tradition in the last 3 years and it has become one of the most significant **community** cultural events in the city of Glen Eira.

An open invitation is extended to everyone next year during Harmony week to come to the centre and enjoy the 4th Annual Multicultural Senior Citizens Festival.

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

A group of twenty two women from Sudan, Greece, Russia, Croatia, Serbia, Eritrea, Philippines, Egypt, Malaysia, and Lebanon came together to celebrate International Women's Day, share their cultural diversity and enjoy each others company on the 8th March.

Many of these women have a strong attachment to the land in their home countries and greatly appreciated the opportunity to develop a connection to their new homeland, by enjoying the beautiful scenery of the Point Nepean National Park on the Mornington Peninsula and learning about the local history of the area.

In the early days, for many new arrivals to Victoria, the Quarantine station in the Park was the first port of call, to ensure that people did not bring infectious diseases into Melbourne.

During the World Wars the area was also of strategic importance, with many historic gun emplacements and tunnels remaining. It was a fun day for everyone and a great way to celebrate the end of summer.



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Workforce Participation Partnerships (WPP) Program is progressing successfully. Over 70 participants have found work with 40 of these in full time employment for more than 4 months.

There continues to be interest from the various refugee communities, those looking for work and employers looking for willing workers. A program review by the Department. for Victorian Communities provided positive feedback about the success of the WPP run by The New Hope Foundation.

We continue liaising with KR Castlemaine and the workers who are employed there. Some Sudanese and Burundi members of the KR team and their families performed traditional dances and were involved in school productions at the Castlemaine State Festival. They were welcomed onto the land and into the community by the local Indigenous Elder Aunty Carmel.



CROSS CULTURAL TRAINING SERVICES

The New Hope Migrant & Refugee Centre provides Cross Cultural Training to service providers and various organisations. Recently, we have delivered training to diverse organisations and have tailored the training material to meet the specific needs of requesting agencies. Topics that have been covered include:

- An historical overview of immigration
- Cross cultural communities
- Recruitment of bilingual workers

If you are interested in arranging Cross Cultural Training for your organisation, please contact us on Phone: 9510 5877 or go to the "Cross Cultural Training" section on our website: www.nhf.org.au.

New Hope Employment

The MRC is registered as an accredited training provider in the state training system and offers a variety of accredited training programs. Our most popular training course is "Workforce Re-Entry Skills". This course covers 3 modules.

The Contemporary Workplace – This module aims to familiarise participants with the current Australian workplace and trends impacting on the job market. Participants will identify the work skills and personal attributes valued by employers in a range of sectors.

Action Planning for Employment – This module aims to provide participants with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to develop an action plan specifying the steps needed to enhance employability and/or work readiness.

Managing Personal Change – This module aims to provide participants with the skills, knowledge and confidence in their own abilities to cope with the demands of preparing for employment, job seeking and the workplace.

If you are interested in the above program, please do not hesitate to contact Angie on ☎ (03) 9563 4407 for more information.

The event was organised by the New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre and speakers included Councillor Judith Klepner, representing the City of Port Phillip and Father Chris Dimolianis, Parish Priest, St Efstathios Greek Orthodox Church in South Melbourne.

Both the Greek and Australian National Anthems were recited by the 130 attendees who then enjoyed a luncheon of Mediterranean delights. The event concluded with attendees and guests participating in some traditional Greek folk music and dancing.



GREEK NATIONAL DAY

On the 25th March the Greek community celebrated Greek National Day, commemorating the independence of Greece and the inception of the modern Greek nation.

In honour of this event, the City of Port Phillip funded a celebratory lunch at Gasworks Arts Park in Albert Park.



New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre

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About the New Hope MRC Newsletter

The New Hope MRC Newsletter is produced by the staff of the New Hope Migrant & Refugee Centre and The New Hope Foundation.

If you wish to subscribe to the newsletter or contribute an article (usually 100-300 words in length) please email: enquiry@nhf.org.au

The contribution deadline for the next issue is: June 10, 2007