

# NEWSBRIEFS

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**We are awakening the conscience of Australia**

**September 2022 Issue 314**

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Dear Friends,

It seems we had a taste of Spring before the rains opened as a deluge across many parts of the country. We are thinking of and praying for those facing severe challenges from the floods.

On a brighter note, in recent conversation with Sri Lankan born - Canadian, Mangalam Lena, and Nivanka Bhagwandas IofCA, Mangalam told us that in 2019 her University supervisor said to her, 'You need to meet IofC. These are people who work with building peace and bringing together people who are enemies to resolve their conflicts.' It was the first Mangalam had heard of IofC. On her supervisor's insistence, eventually she came to know IofC and is now part of the IofC Canadian team, working with Sri Lankan diaspora, and as a Creators of Peace facilitator. She offered these affirming and resonating words, 'IofC gives me a lot of hope.'

Last week I spoke at the Australian-Indian Community Centre, on the Gandhi Jayanti, amongst an impressive array of speakers. Each one affirmed the message that 'Change begins with me' is an integral learning for any real and long-lasting change to occur in society. As I presented on peace education, I reflected on the Wisdom Leadership that Gandhi brought to the world, and that, in turn, we are able to mirror through our IofCA fellowship, practices and workshops.

I am excited to share that two conferences are opening in Asia Plateau, India in January 2023. Please see the details below. As the world re-opens, the 'Festival of Arts; Hearts for the Future' and 'Emergent Future; Rethinking our world together', will invite us into understanding and responding to 'What our world needs most acutely today.' We are seeking an Aussie team interested in attending and bringing the learning home for application in our work in Australia. Please see details below and watch out for an email with further information coming soon.

Finally, as we look to the growing momentum for the First Nations Voice in the Constitution, we feel into the role IofCA has to play. Please join us in the *Turruk* workshops, online and in-person, starting next

Wednesday 19 Oct. And for those in Melbourne, 3 November forum with Thomas Mayor and Uncle Shane Charles. We are soon to be visited at Armagh by local Federal MP, Dr Michelle Ananda-Rajah who is very interested to learn more about our Trustbuilding project and the First Peoples Pathway.

Let us continue to move forward with openness, curiosity and compassion around all that we do.

Cheery blessings,

**Marg Hepworth**  
Executive Officer

## Our Work

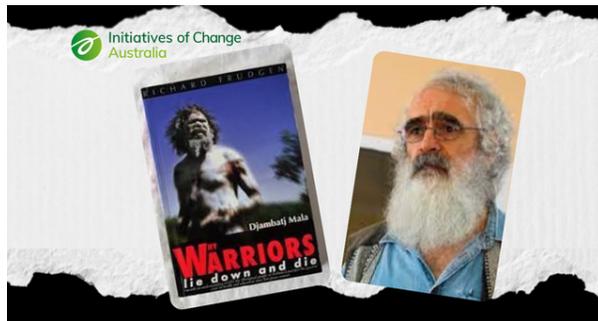
### Unpacking the Uluru Statement from the Heart with Uncle Glenn Loughrey.

On Monday 5 September Uncle Glenn Loughrey, Wiradjuri man, artist, priest and community leader joined IofCA for an online session on the Uluru Statement from the heart. Uncle Glenn unpacked how he sees the Statement from the Heart as a useful model for change, with justice for First Peoples at the centre of Voice, Treaty, Truth and Makarrata.

A recording of the evening is now available. click on the image to play.



### Special evening with Richard Trudgen, author of *Why Warriors Lie Down & Die*



IofCA hosted a very special online evening with Richard Trudgen, author of *Why Warriors Lie Down and Die* on 13 September.

Richard has been a pioneering figure in community education and development, the last 35 years working alongside the Yolngu people of North East Arnhem Land. He is a courageous speaker, challenging us to open our eyes to current issues of great concern for the Yolngu people, whilst sharing his own remarkable journey of learning First Nations deep connectedness and spirituality.

### Life Matters NSW

A Life Matters workshop was held in Gerringong NSW from 2- 4 September. The workshop brought together a diverse group of participants who enjoyed the experience of having time to reflect, listen and learn about themselves and be change-makers.

'It (Life Matters workshop) changes people's lives. We may think we are living to the optimal level in our life, but after Life Matters we realise there are whole new levels we can go to to make a difference for ourselves and for others.' - *Shivani Cameron*

We look forward to the next workshop in Melbourne. Details below.



## Engaging Constructively in Challenging

The ECCC online workshop series facilitated by Shoshana course of five weeks with the enthusiastic participation gives people practical and essential skills in how to navigate the many complex elements of difficult conversations and conflict.



'The trainers are outgoing, flexible and will always provide you with a listening ear to ask and clarify concepts. Both Shoshana and Mike are incredibly knowledgeable and will make sure you walk away with something that will impact your ability to communicate and create a space for tough and challenging conversations.' - *Amiel Nubaha*

The next series starts soon. Details below.



## Creators of Peace South Australia Retreat

From 26-28 August, 12 women gathered for the annual Creators of Peace SA retreat, held on Ngarrindjeri country in Wellington, South Australia, at 'River Connections' – a perfect location to retreat from busy lives and reconnect with one another.

'Together we spent time reflecting and discussing what it means to connect with ourselves, others and the world. To help us connect with ourselves we drew on the wisdom of Aboriginal elder, Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr and her reflection called *Dadirri* - inner, deep listening and quiet, still awareness.'

We enjoyed reconnecting with each other in a more informal way over delicious, shared meals, fun games and watching the pelicans take flight over the beautiful Murray River. Each of us left feeling a deep sense of gratitude for the opportunity to stop and reflect; for our network of Creators of Peace and especially for each other.'

- *Bek Brown*

## Raising Peace Festival

IofCA was represented at the annual Raising Peace Festival held in September to celebrate International Peace day.

Executive Officer Marg Hepworth was invited to speak on the Raising Peace Festival Yarning Panel, on First Nations Voice in the Constitution, alongside Aunty Ali Golding and Uncle Ray Minniecon. The panel examined ways of taking action towards justice and peacebuilding, which in turn could become a model for

the world.

The IofCA Creators of Peace program hosted a New Narratives for Peace story sharing with approximately 30 participants from diverse backgrounds, leading to stimulating conversations on personal steps to peacebuilding, which was well received by all those who participated.

'Hopeful, nurturing, thought provoking, enriching, reassuring, enlightening, engaging, informative' were the words participants used to describe their experience of the workshop.



## Celebrations



Jim Coulter, a pioneer in the work of IofC around the world and in Australia, celebrated his 100th birthday with his wife Rita, sons Phil and Gordon and a few friends from IofCA.

'From flying in the war, to peace building in post WWII Germany, to reconciliation work through Asia and the Pacific, it was Jim and Rita's deep honesty and courage that led them to building deep and lasting friendships that also wrought change in people's lives...200 years of two lives lived in faith it is impossible to comprehend the connections and contributions of Jim and Rita to so many

people and situations.' - Nigel Heywood

As a special gift, Nigel Heywood crafted a stunning photo-book, highlighting the extraordinary people who have been touched by Jim's own extraordinary life. IofCA gifted Jim a full set of Australian coins from the year of his birth, 1922.

All of us at IofCA wish Jim a very happy 100th birthday!

## Upcoming Events



**TURRUK**  
Trustbuilding Through Truth Telling & Deep Listening

A series of five cultural intelligence workshops with Uncle Shane Charles, First Peoples and allies. Hosted live online and in-person at Armagh 226 Kooyong Rd Toorak, Melbourne.

**19 Oct - 16 Nov**  
**Wednesdays**  
**10am -1 pm AEDT**

[www.au.iofc.org/turruk](http://www.au.iofc.org/turruk)

**\$30/ \$45/ \$60 per module**

Sponsored by:  
**RT Edgar**




**Engaging Constructively in Challenging Conversations**

**ONLINE VIA ZOOM**

ECCC is a 5-week online course designed to give you insights, skills and confidence to have constructive conversations in the midst of differences and conflicts.

It is experiential and practical, and combines looking inward to develop self-awareness and practical tools for having the conversation.

**Special Launch Price \$250**  
Concession/Student \$150

**Starts Wednesday October 26**

Session 1 - Wednesday 26 Oct 7:00 - 9:00 pm  
Session 2 - Wednesday 02 Nov 7:00 - 9:00 pm  
Session 3 - Wednesday 09 Nov 7:00 - 9:00 pm  
Session 4 - Wednesday 16 Nov 7:00 - 9:00 pm  
Session 5 - Wednesday 23 Nov 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Register now at: <https://cccpc01.eventbrite.com.au>

Facilitators  
**Shoshana Faire**  
Co-ordinator of the wellbeing team Everyone Can Win - Responding to Conflict Constructively  
**Mike Lowe**  
Lead Facilitating and Trainer, Initiatives of Change Australia

For More Information: <https://au.iofc.org/eccc> Contact Mike Lowe: (03) 9222 1218



**Turruk - Trustbuilding through Truth Telling and Deep Listening**  
**From 19 October - 16 November, Wednesdays**  
**10am -1pm AEDT**  
**In person at Armagh and streamed live on Zoom**  
[Buy Tickets](#)

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**A Word from Our EO and Chair**

**Margaret Hepworth**  
Executive Officer - IoFCA

Dear Friends,

As we move into the end of another busy year, let's take time to both celebrate the year behind us and quietly reflect on all that has happened in a year that feels like it began only yesterday. In other words, it is a time to be both noisy and silent - and as IoFCA, we are good at both!

The pages before you capture some of what we can proudly 'sing' about. The people we have met and shared special moments with; some life-changing relationships developed, some chatty and laughing, others quietly comforting; programs, events and initiatives making a difference; individuals carrying IoFCA into their daily lives. IoFCA questioning: 'Who we are?' How we 'be' and how we 'do'. It is our probing that helps us grow, and move beyond our own self-imposed limitations.

My personal quiet times have given me insights and roads to explore - both times and outer. As IoFCA, we work in such an interwoven way, that opens to something of the mystery-working through us.

Recently, in meditative state, I had a vision of an owl flying in. It turned suddenly, gracefully flying upside down. I held out my hand and it rested peacefully on my outstretched palm. I drew it close, and in silence, held a conversation with wisdom.

I have been busy recently, reading Peter Theoharis' reflections on 'What is Initiatives of Change?' He writes on 'A way for everyone: a Way of life'. Peter writes of Buchman as being described as an initiator, rather than a founder. This removes a sense of 'ownership' of the movement and opens us to the question, 'in this world, as it sits today, what is it we can initiate to bring hope, peace and remain solution focussed?'

Following, is the strength in Buchman's convictions: 'There is an answer'. As Peter elucidates, 'The task for everybody (is) to find it and put it into practice.'

Something of all of this leaps off these pages as we celebrate our IoFCA year of 2022.

Wishing a very happy festive season to you and your families. And a very peaceful break.

Cherry blessings,  
Marg



**Life MATTERS**

Initiatives of Change is a worldwide movement of people who are committed to the transformation of society through changes in human motives and behaviour, starting with our own <https://au.iofc.org>

**ARE YOU READY**  
To be the change you want to see around you?

**WOULD YOU LIKE**  
To be part of a network for global change?

Then Life Matters is for YOU

**A 3 Day Workshop**

Friday 28 October, 7:30 pm to  
Monday 31 October 4 pm

**\$500 covers program, accommodation and meals**

Scholarships available.

The Program will include:

- Discussion groups
- Team activities
- Time for reflection
- Panel presentations
- Creative workshops
- Story sharing

ARMAGH  
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[REGISTER HERE](#)



“As we come to the close of the year and about to let 2022 behind us, it is valuable, both as individuals and as an organization and movement to reflect on what we have achieved, what went well and what didn't as much as we wanted to. This reflective process, in quiet times and in seeking inner guidance, personal and collective, can help us think about what we would like to call into our lives moving forward, and help us make the commitments that will shape the year ahead, both personally and as an organization and movement.

The last 3 years have been years of world-wide rapid, accelerated and unexpected change.

At IoFCA, we haven't been immune to the impact of such changes. However, we have been holding to the greater vision of making a difference in the world, fostering the leadership for the right things to happen in our organization and our movement so that we can contribute to changing the world around us as we are individually and collectively guided to. We have endeavored to be guided to and to call for:

A moral / ethical stand as a moral moving force

Leadership in moving forth to meet the challenges of the times, on a personal, community or wider level.

Expanding our partnerships in cooperating with other change agents or agencies to work for the good of the whole.

More specifically, as an organization, we have continued tackling the big questions of our long term financial and program sustainability. We are now very close to testing the market for a potential take of some of the land of strength to ensure our long term financial health, program delivery, the re-energising of our Network and supporting the work of IoFCA in our region.

Our delivery of the Trust Building Through Truth, Telling & Deep Healing program (Turruk) has produced outstanding outcomes and created many partnerships with indigenous individuals and organizations and also has set IoFCA up for an active partnering in the national movement around the Uluru Statement of the Heart.

After a long, systematic and step-by-step consultation with our members, we are also, now, at the point of testing our proposed new constitution with our laywers before coming back to our members.

We are continuing deepening our IoFCA philosophy and practice.

As the world at large finds itself at crossroads with crises everywhere, we are all reminded that the most important thing for each and everyone, here and all over the world, is to create for ourselves the fundamental changes that will bring the deep healing in our souls and the good of our communities.”

- Paul Nicoumas

**IOFC AUSTRALIA**



**Join us in South Australia for dinner and a social outing whilst connecting with others and supporting a good cause.**  
**Sunday 23 October, 6 - 9 pm**  
**Rumi Palace, 2/303 Prospect Road, Blair Athol, SA 5084**  
[Buy Ticket](#)

**Creative You presents a Night of Entertainment - The Heart of the Fire**  
**Saturday 26 November, 7 - 10 pm**

[Watch a video](#) of what you could experience at a LM workshop



### Creators of Peace Circle

Be the Peace you want to see in the world

Peace is not a static state – we need to keep working at it each generation. How do we create peace in our family, in our communities...in the world?

Join a Creators of Peace Circle to explore what it takes to create peace... starting with yourself.

Come together with women of different cultural backgrounds who want to create a more peaceful and harmonious society. Share and learn of each other's personal stories, values and beliefs. Break down barriers and broaden your understanding of others. Form friendships across racial, religious and social divides.

This Peace Circle will take place on Zoom over 7 sessions from Fri 28 Oct - Fri 25 Nov 2022

This Peace Circle is free to join. We welcome donations at the end as a way to 'pay it forward', so we can continue to offer all women the opportunity to participate in exploring their role as a peace creator.

[Read more and Register](#)

## Collaborative Event



Come and learn from Indigenous speakers about the Referendum for an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, why your support is critical, and the plan to bring Australians together. Our speakers will discuss what an Indigenous Voice to Parliament means and why we should all care.

Speakers: Thomas Mayor, Uncle Shane Charles, Ian Hamm

[Open flyer](#)

Date: Thursday 3 November  
Time: 6:30pm – 8:00pm  
Venue: St Kilda Town Hall, 99A Carlisle Street, St Kilda

[RSVP here](#)

## IofC International Event

**Emergent Future: Rethinking our World Together**  
28 January - 1 February 2023  
Asia Plateau, Panchagani, India

An International gathering to pool our global perspectives to find inspiration and direction both spiritually and practically. A space for discussion and dialogue to understand and respond to what our world needs most acutely today.

**UTSAV- Festival of Arts, Hearts for the Future**

18 - 26 January 2023

Asia Plateau, Panchagani, India

To mark 50 years of Asia Plateau Theatre and 55 years of Asia Plateau, all those who have experienced personal change through IofC, and have let their inner voice be their chief daily inspirational director for societal action, to come together to showcase fresh creativity through performances and writings. It will be an opportunity for the global IofC community to search together for collective ways ahead.

**More details to come!**

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