



Initiatives of Change
Australia

newsbriefs

Building trust across the world's divides

JUNE 2018 NO. 293

Our National Meeting in Melbourne over the June long weekend celebrated the changes of the past year and welcomed our new Community Engagement Manager, David Vincent. Many already know David through his advocacy with and for the South Sudanese diaspora in Australia, his TV appearances, and his book, 'The Boy Who Wouldn't Die.' Working with others and building on deep relationships in the community, David's work has begun with a series of peace building activities through faith leaders in Melbourne and beyond.

In May, Creators of Peace facilitators from Australia traveled to Bougainville on the invitation of the Teop Tanita Creators of Peace Association. Their work - which included long journeys on foot and preparations by torchlight - seeks to promote healing of the past and prepares for the upcoming referendum on independence from Papua New Guinea.

Read on for much more - including news of the 2018 cycle of the Sustainable Impact Mentoring (SIM) program, which is now in full swing. As we sharpen our focus on opportunities for peace building and reconciliation through personal action in our own spheres of influence, we invite you to walk with us.

Newsbriefs is the bi-monthly newsletter of Initiatives of Change (lofC) in Australia – part of a worldwide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds who share a vision for a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

NEWS

Our Annual Report is out!



We launched our Annual Report for the 2017-18 financial year at the National Meeting in Melbourne in June. Check out developments in our three core programs: Life Matters, which focuses on discovering oneself and one's deepest priorities and purpose; Creators of Peace, on building peace within in order to reach out and build peace with others; and Sustainable Impact Mentoring, on equipping people to care for the planet we share.

lofC Australia continues to be an incubator and support system for those who want to make a positive change in the world. Many community projects have emerged in this way, and this year's report covers just a selection. [Read more.](#)

Trust Building Through Faith Leaders

On 30 June, the same day that a 'permanent ceasefire' was proclaimed by warring parties in the five-year civil war in South Sudan, 70 South Sudanese and Sudanese church leaders – men and women, of all denominations – met at Armagh, the lofC centre in Melbourne, in a quest for unity and peace. [Read more.](#)



Peace Building in Bougainville

Helen Mills, Liz Weeks, and Bougainville-born Therese Kemelfield ran a training event for Creators of Peace facilitators in Bougainville in May. They travelled from Australia at the invitation of the women of the Teop Taonita Creators of Peace Circle Association to facilitate two Peace Circles and deliver five days of facilitation training. [Read more.](#)



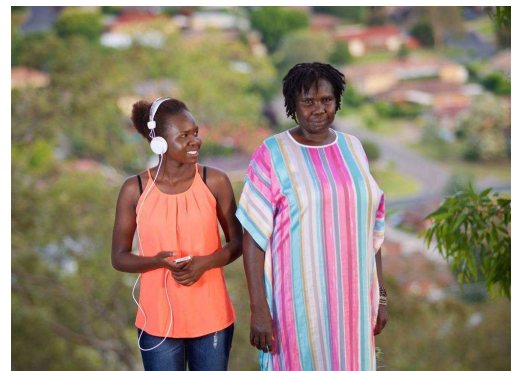
Homegrown Initiatives for a Greener Tomorrow

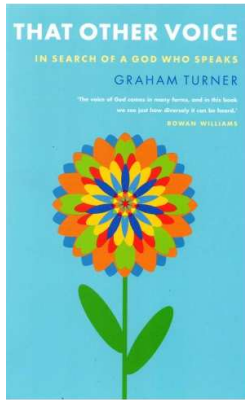
Jean, a waitress at a café in Melbourne, noticed her customers' use of plastic bags and takeaway cups - and decided to do something about it, through the Sustainable Impact Mentoring (SIM) program. [Read more](#), and [hear from participants](#) in the current 2018 cycle.

REVIEWS

Friday Film Series: Constance on the Edge

Our winter film series starts up again in July. **Mark Russell** reviews our first offering, about a family of Sudanese refugees who fled a warzone over a decade earlier and must now navigate their next stage of survival: everyday life in Wagga Wagga, NSW. Centred around Constance, matriarch of this extended family, the story captures problems with integrating into the community, troubles with the law, as well as PTSD, addiction, and other mental health issues. [Read more.](#)

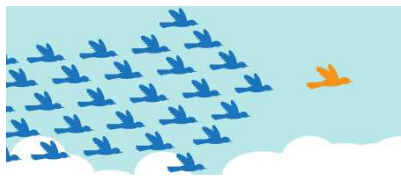




Books: *That Other Voice* by Graham Turner

British journalist and broadcaster Graham Turner's new book, *That Other Voice*, addresses the fundamental issue of whether or not there is a God who can speak to us in this day and age. And, if so, how? Turner takes a suitably sceptical view without making any presumptions. He interviews people from the major faith traditions: Jewish, Hindu, Christian, sufi Muslim, Tibet Buddhist and including the emphasis of Initiatives of Change on silent listening in 'quiet times'. [Read more.](#)

EVENTS



Life Matters Workshops

Saturday 14 July: Join James Mclvor, General Manager for Youth Justice in Gippsland, in an exciting and interactive workshop to find out how you can set free the leader within and bring positive change for your community. This

workshop was planned for Life Matters alumni, and is open to others who are interested in the opportunities that Life Matters can create. **Venue:** Initiatives of Change Australia, 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak, VIC 3142. The cost of \$10 includes morning tea. RSVP to events.au@iofc.org or call Rob Wood, 0401-621-609

Sunday 22 July: Calling all 18 to 35-year-olds who want to be change makers. Information afternoon about the upcoming Life Matters workshop at the Scout Camp in Appin, NSW. Come to the Sydwest Building, Level 2, 125 Main St, Blacktown, NSW 2148, from 2 - 5 pm. For more information and to RSVP, contact Joyce on (02) 95592301.

Friday 21 September: A 'Life Still Matters' course for those over 35 will be held in Port Elliot, South Australia, from 7.30 pm on Friday 21 September to 4.30 pm on Monday 24 September. The venue, overlooking historic Encounter Bay, promises space for our own encounters – with the sea, silence and sharing – encounters that can reveal new hope and direction. Enquiries to [John Mills](#).

Friday 28 September to Monday 1 October: Life Matters course at the Scout Camp at Cataract Dam in Appin, NSW. The course gives young adults aged 18-35 years a chance to look at their lives and develop new skills for living through a varied and interactive programme. Enquiries to [Assefa Bekele](#). If you would like to help with facilitation, technical set-up, or sharing your own Life Matters experience, please contact [Joyce or Malcolm Fraser](#).



Friday Film Series

Friday 27 July: One family. Two wars. Three countries. What does it take to forge a new life far from home? Through *Constance*, we get a glimpse of the next stage of the refugee struggle, as she and her family deal with problems around integration, legal troubles, and complex mental health issues in their new home of Wagga Wagga, NSW.

Friday 31 August: A snapshot of the influence white Australia continues to have on all of Aboriginal Australia. Legendary Australian actor David Gulpilil narrates a stark, yet multi-layered and richly

photographed documentary that brings new perspective to understanding what self-determination really means.

Friday 28 September: At an average of two metres above sea level, the Central Pacific nation of Kiribati has become one of climate change's most visible victims. We follow Maria Tiimon as she pleads her country's case to a painfully ambivalent international community. *The Hungry Tide* asks: if Kiribati is the climate change canary in the coal-mine, why are we still digging?

All films will screen at 'Armagh', 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak, VIC 3142. Come at 6.30 pm for pizza! The film will screen at 7 pm. Discussion, tea and coffee to follow. Suggested donation: \$15.

RSVP Communications.AU@iofc.org, or text 0432-562-454.



Sustainability Fair

Saturday 8 September: First annual Sustainability Fair at Armagh, 11 am to 3 pm. This event coincides with planting day for the biochar community garden, and the Public Showcase of our 2018 Sustainable Impact Mentoring (SIM) Program - a 7-month program through which small teams develop unique local projects to solve community needs. More about activities at the Sustainability Fair [here](#).

Creators of Peace

Creators of Peace (CoP) is a women's initiative that aims to bring peace by starting with oneself and being peace-builders wherever we are, in our hearts, our homes, our workplaces and our community. CoP has grown to a global network of women working on different continents through Creators of Peace Circles, workshops, personal encounters, community-building activities and international conferences.



Sydney

For information about Creators of Peace in Sydney, contact creatorsofpeace.nsw@gmail.com or call 0408 689 358.

Saturday 7 July: Auburn Network meeting, 1.30 for 2:00pm to 4:00pm at the Youth Room at Auburn Centre for Community, 44A Macquarie Rd, Auburn, NSW. Topic: NAIDOC Week.

Sunday 15 July: Hills Network meeting, 1.30 for 2.00pm to 4.00pm at The Small Meeting Room, Rowland Village, 301 Galston Road, Galston, NSW.

Saturday 22 July: Peace Focus Gathering in the East, 1.30 for 2.00pm to 4.00pm at The Library, Princess Gardens, 7-11 Princess Street Rose Bay, NSW. Contact: 0421 277 269.

Sunday 19 August: Hills Network meeting, 1.30 for 2.00pm to 4.00pm at 363 Galston Road, Galston, NSW. Topic:

Sharing friendship over a cup of coffee

Saturday 8 September: Peace Focus Gathering 3.15 - 5.30 pm. Topic: 'Honouring Women Through Their Narrative'. The event will be in Gladesville, NSW. Contact [Maria Moy](#) or call 0413 585 364.

Saturday 22 September: International Day of Peace picnic, 11 am to 2 pm at Sydney Olympic Park. This is for all Creators of Peace people and supporters from Sydney and around. Bring your favourite food to share! Please email creatorsofpeace.nsw@gmail.com if you are able to help out on the day with set-up, music, or welcome.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday 27 October will be the last Peace Focus Gathering for 2018, led by Elizabeth Devine. The Peace Focus Gatherings bring together people who want to be educated and engaged in bringing more peace to the world. Bring your open heart and big smile! Also bring a plate to share if you would like to stay for dinner and continue the peace conversation.

Melbourne

For information about Creators of Peace in Melbourne, please contact [Elise Sampson](#).

5 October: CoP Peace Circle at Armagh over two weekends in October 2018. The opening session takes place from 7-9 pm on Friday 5 October, and includes refreshments afterwards. The following session takes place from 9 am - 5 pm on Saturday 6 October, and the final session from 9 am to 5 pm on Saturday 13 October. The full-day sessions include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

See all events

GET INVOLVED

Volunteer with us

Initiatives of Change prides itself on being a big family, nationally and internationally, and there are many ways to be involved. As a volunteer, you are welcome to join our bi-monthly social catch-ups and workshops. These are a great way to meet new people and also to get to know more about IofC. Volunteers also have access to the IofCA mentoring program, with experienced people who have worked for many years in peace and trust-building initiatives all around the world.

There are many areas you can volunteer in, depending on your skills sets and where we have a need. If you are interested, please contact our [Volunteer Co-ordinator](#) with an introduction about yourself, your motivation, and your area of interest. We'd love to hear from you!

DONATE



Your donation allows Initiatives of Change Australia to sustain its trust-building and peace-building work. An investment today will deliver benefits for many years to come. Every donation, large or small, has a direct impact on the individuals and communities with whom we work. You can contribute through PayPal [here](#) or contact the [Treasurer](#) to send a cheque or make a bank transfer.



Donate Now

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