

DECEMBER 2017 NO. 290

In the last months of 2017, the Initiatives of Change Australia (IofCA) network began planning how our new strategic direction of 'empowering leadership for peace and trust building in both local and overseas communities' will become a daily reality in everything that we do. This has meant looking back as well as into the future, understanding how the trajectory of the organisation brings us to this present moment.

You'll find this in Jean Brown's reflections at the Asia-Pacific Regional Gathering on how the Creators of Peace (CoP) network, an IofC programme, has changed since its beginnings 26 years ago. In the lead story by Manu Granados, CoP's recently-appointed national administrator in Australia, there is a flavour of how CoP is influencing lives of young women today. And at Armagh in Melbourne, the IofC centre for Asia and the Pacific, there has been a different kind of new beginning as a small group of network members have begun to experiment with using the lovely garden space for urban food production.

Newsbriefs is the bi-monthly newsletter of Initiatives of Change (IofC) 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



Peace Studies Students Reflect: 'Peace Begins With Me.'

Clara from Brazil, Indriani from Indonesia, and Carrie from the US, three students enrolled in a Masters course in Peace and Conflict Studies, attended their first Creators of Peace (CoP) Circle in 2017. **Manu Granados**, CoP national administrator for Australia, caught up with the three friends to find out what impact their involvement has had. [Read more.](#)

New Developments in 25 Years of Creators of Peace

In 2016, Creators of Peace (CoP) celebrated its 25th anniversary as a global network of women in peace building. Jean Brown served as an international coordinator for 23 years, and developed the approach that today is being applied today in over 40 countries. **Kirsty Argento**, lofC Australia, interviewed Jean before participants at the Asia-Pacific Regional Gathering that took place in Taiwan in 2017. [Read more.](#)



Strengthening Urban Sustainability Through A Biochar Food Garden

The Toorak home 'Armagh' was gifted to Initiatives of Change in 1956, and the original parts of the building are now more than 100 years old. While considerable effort has focused on maintaining the interior of the building for hosting conferences, residential courses and other events, in 2017 a small group of volunteers began experimenting with using the lush, expansive grounds for an urban food garden. [Read more.](#)

PEOPLE

'Father of Australian Multiculturalism' Honoured in Poland

Jerzy Zubrzycki was known as the 'father of Australian multiculturalism'. As an academic, public intellectual, and advisor to the Whitlam, Fraser and Howard governments, Zubrzycki contributed greatly to the foundation of Australia's policies on multiculturalism and social inclusion.



lofC workers **John Bond** and the late **John Williams** co-authored a book about Zubrzycki's life, which was launched in a Polish-language translation in 2017. Two events marked the release of 'The Promise of Diversity' in Polish: an event at Krakow's International Cultural Centre on 11 April, and another at the Polish Academy of Science in Warsaw on 29 September. [Read more.](#)

EVENTS

Life Matters Workshop



Life Matters, a personal development course that lofCA offers over the space of a long weekend, took place four times in 2017. This residential workshop offers life direction and leadership skills to people from diverse backgrounds and cultures between the ages of 18-35. Life Matters weekends were offered in Gerringong on the south coast of New South Wales, in Bogor, Indonesia, for a Southeast Asian cohort, and twice in Melbourne - most recently as 'Life Still Matters' for the over-35s!

The Life Matters team is offering this opportunity again in Melbourne over the long weekend of January 2018. Come and meet others who share the same desire and want to live a purpose-filled life. The weekend will include panel presentations, workshops, story-sharing, team-building activities, reflective silence, group discussion, video(s) and an entertainment night.

The course starts at 6 pm on **Thursday, 25 January 2018**, and runs to 4 pm on **Sunday, 28 January 2018** at Armagh, 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak, Victoria 3142. Registrations are open. Please contact [Rob Wood](#) or [Elisse Higginbotham](#) for more information.

Creators of Peace

Creators of Peace (CoP) aims to spread peace, starting with oneself and being peace-builders wherever we are - in our hearts, our homes, our workplace and our community. Since its beginning in 1991, CoP has grown to a global network of women working on different continents through CoP Peace Circles, workshops, personal encounters, community building activities and international conferences.

The CoP network in Australia is most active in Sydney, where there are over 400 network members. A series of Melbourne events will relaunch CoP in Victoria in 2018 through a series of CoP Peace Circles and related events. All events take place at Armagh, 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak, Victoria 3142.

February 2018: This CoP Peace Circle will be facilitated by Liz Weeks and Athalia Zwartz. The opening session takes place from 7-9 pm on Friday 23 February, and includes refreshments afterwards. Sessions continue on Saturday 24 February and Sunday 25 February, running from 9-5 pm each day, including morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Saturday 14 April 2018: Peace Focus Gathering from 10 am to 12.30 pm. CoP Peace Circles usually take place over a whole weekend. This two-and-a-half-hour event offers a 'taster' of what it's like to take part in a Peace Circle.

June 2018: This CoP Peace Circle is organized over two weekends. The opening session takes place from 7-9 pm on Friday 22 June, and includes refreshments afterwards. The following session takes place from 9 am - 5 pm on Saturday 23 June, and the final session from 9 am to 5 pm on Saturday 30 June. The full-day sessions include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea each day.

October 2018: This CoP Peace Circle is organized over two weekends. 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 each day.

To express interest, and for more information, please leave your details here: <https://goo.gl/forms/78DpfbEv9KEG0dqf2> or contact [Kirsty Argento](#) by email, or call (03) 9822 1218.

Sustainability Impact Mentoring

Applications are open for the new cycle of SIM! This program seeks to develop emerging leaders on sustainability and the environment. Participants are connected with experienced mentors in the environment, sustainability and international development fields, and will take part in a series of workshops on Human-Centred Design principles, reflective practices, and the important connections between sustainable living, leadership and taking focused action in community.

Workshop dates are: Saturday 17 February from 10 am - 4 pm; Tuesday 6 March from 7 - 9 pm; Saturday 21 April from 10 am - 4 pm; Tuesday 22 May from 7 - 9 pm; and Saturday 16 June from 10 am - 4 pm; and Tuesday 10 July from 7 - 9 pm. A SIM half-day public event will take place on Saturday 15 September. All events are at Armagh.

Applications are invited up to 2 February 2018. If you know someone who would benefit from this program, please refer them to the details on the lofCA website: <http://au.iofc.org/sustainable-impact-mentoring>. More information from kirsty.argento@iofc.org.

Fellowship Dinner at Armagh

There will be a few of these in 2018 and all friends of lofC, past and present, are welcome! You may choose to bring food to share, or make a donation towards catering. The first one of the year will be on **Thursday 15 February**, from 6.30-8.30 pm. RSVP [Cheryl Wood](#).

South Sudan Women's Conference

Saturday 10 March to Sunday 11 March: lofC Australia and the State Government of Victoria are supporting this event, which takes place in Melbourne. The event is auspiced by lofC Australia, working in partnership with several South Sudan diaspora groups. The conference is timed for the week of International Women's Day. For more information, contact Program Coordinator [Kathryn Gor](#).

Armagh Market Day

Saturday 17 March 2018: This event takes place from 10 am to 3 pm in the grounds of Armagh, 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak, Victoria 3142. Food trucks, craft stalls and other attractions will be available. For more information, contact lofC Australia Events Coordinator [Katrina Grantham](#).

[See all events](#)

REVIEWS



Cambodia's Lost History of Rock 'n' Roll

The Cambodian genocide is a subject we in the West are taught little, if anything, about. Any link between The Beatles and Pol Pot is tenuous at first glance but, as the 2014 documentary *Don't Think I've Forgotten* shows, rock 'n' roll was an effective weather vane for the political climate in '60s and '70s Cambodia.

Initiatives of Change showcased *Don't Think I've Forgotten* on Thursday 30 November at Armagh in Melbourne. The documentary is a philosophical corollary to its recent screening of *Across the Universe* (2007) – a musical built on Beatles songs, which follows two star-crossed lovers as they navigate the turbulence of the free-love era.

Mark Russell ponders on the two films as contrasting studies in freedom, and asks where Australia's protest songs of today can be found. [Read more.](#)

GET INVOLVED

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 lofC. Volunteers also have access to the lofCA 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 Volunteer Co-ordinator kirsty.argento@iofc.org with an introduction about yourself, your motivation, and your area of interest.



From all of us here at lofC Australia, we wish you a new year of light and peace.



Your donation allows Initiatives of Change Australia to sustain its trust 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.

[Donate Now](#)

Follow us on



Newsbriefs is published by Initiatives of Change (ABN 22 004 350 789)
226 Kooyong Road, Toorak, VIC 3142, Australia, www.au.iofc.org.
Contributions, news and comments are welcome, and can be sent to delia.paul@iofc.org.