Initiatives of Change
Australia

newsbriefs

Building trust across the world's divides

August 2020 NO. 306

It's almost spring again.

As we contemplate the changes that the COVID-19 crisis has brought to our lives, we're feeling a burst of renewal on the way. Renewal in the ways we connect with and care for one another. Renewal in our appreciation of the small things in life.

The need to shift our meetings and events almost completely online has helped rejuvenate the Initiatives of Change network, in ways we could not have envisaged a year ago. See for example how Creators of Peace Circles have begun offering Circles online, opening up new possibilities for participation. Also see Ali Yaghobi's reflection on how the practice of 'quiet time', learned during his time in a recent Life Matters workshop, has helped him navigate these trying times.

The practice of new approaches has also given us pause to look back and reflect on the strength of our roots in the movement that Frank Buchman, our founder, initiated almost 100 years ago. The work and wisdom of those who went before us, are as relevant as ever before.

This month, we marked the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II—a watershed event in the lives of our elders. We share here two stories of that time, one of them referenced in the Australian Prime Minister's speech at an event to honour our veterans. And long-term IofCA volunteers, Rob and Cheryl Wood, reflect with young film-maker Mike Worsman on their 50 years of living and working with others to 'be the change you want to see in the world.'

May your days be lightened and blessed at this change of season. We look forward to seeing you at an event or online space soon.

Newsbriefs is the bi-monthy newsletter of Initiatives of Change 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 Circles Go Online

COVID-19 restrictions moved Creators of Peace Circles from face-to-face gatherings to an online space. There were things to learn and new strategies needed to re-create the same atmosphere. How do you think it went?

Read more.
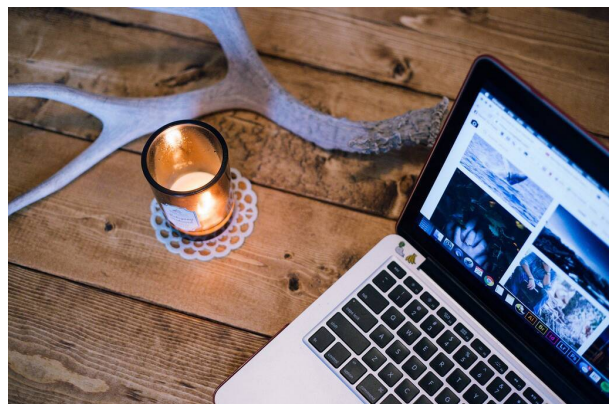
Remembering Japan's Torchbearers for Peace

In 1950, five years after the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, IofC veteran Chris Mayor interviewed the cities' mayors whilst at an international conference in Caux. Their commitment to peace was striking. This year, on the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII, *ABC News* spoke with Chris Mayor about his encounter. Watch the video clip and read excerpts from the original interview here.

'From the ruins of war, sworn enemies became our devoted friends'

At an August 2020 event to honour Australia's World War II veterans, Prime Minister Scott Morrison paid tribute to their sacrifice and told a remarkable story. A story of metal recovered from a sunken ship, transformed into crosses. A gift that broke tensions between two nations. IofC Australia board member Mike Brown has a personal connection to how this gift came to be. Read more.

The Annual Report 2019-20 is out!

IofC Australia has published its annual report for the financial year 2019-2020. Besides financial information, the annual report describes IofC Australia's programs, the supporter community that carries out much of the work, and individual stories of change.

Read it online.

PERSONAL STORIES

Rob and Cheryl Wood

Long-term volunteers with IofC, Rob and Cheryl Wood, have much to share with us about their 50+ years of

volunteering with IofC Australia. Their work has taken them to countries around the world, as well as led them to work with diverse communities here in Melbourne. They speak with Mike Worsman about the thinking behind their work and commitment to the idea, 'be the change you want to see in the world.'
Listen now.

Ali Yaghobi

When he was invited to the Life Matters workshop, Ali Yaghobi, a dedicated community advocate, expected something much like the professional development events he had attended in the past. The workshop content left him pleasantly surprised—and the practice of 'quiet time' was just what he needed to personally deal with the pandemic lockdown that commenced soon after. The workshop has motivated him to continue his community work and expand its reach.
Read more.

EVENTS

Qualities and Strategies of Peacemakers: Online Course

Saturday 5 September to Saturday 10 October 2020

An introduction to IofC's approach to peacemaking, based on five documentary films followed by an interactive analysis of how these peacemakers responded to conflict, the strategies they adopted and the qualities they displayed. Sessions are conducted by Peter Riddell, convenor of IofC UK's Agenda for Reconciliation programme. Time: 0800 - 1000 GMT every week (6 - 8 pm AEST) Via Zoom. Please see here for more details and to register.

Creators of Peace Auburn Network

Saturday 5 September 2020: Join via Zoom.
Time: 1.45 to 3:30 pm. RSVP to creatorsofpeacensw.au@iofc.org to obtain the Zoom link.

Creating Space

Monday 7 September 2020: Creating Space is a monthly gathering at IofCA for focused conversations on a selected theme held online via Zoom.
Time: 7 to 9 pm
Topic: Religion and Spirituality
Speakers: Sudarshan Suresh and David Clisby
To register, please RSVP to Kylie at info.au@iofc.org.
You will then receive the link to connect via Zoom and some guidelines for the meeting.

Effective Leadership in Times of Crisis - Online Seminar Series

Sunday 13 September to Sunday 8 November 2020: Following the webinar with Prof Rajmohan Gandhi on World Refugee Day, _Transformational Resilience In Times of Crisis_, and in light of the COVID-19 challenges we are

facing, *Workforce Diversity Consultancy* in collaboration with *Initiatives of Change* bring you this series of online leadership seminars for leaders and emerging leaders. Seminars are free of charge but registration is required as spots are limited. Time: 5 to 6 pm. Event schedule and registration details available here.

Creators of Peace Hills Network

Sunday 20 September 2020: Join via Zoom.
Time: 2 to 4 pm. RSVP to Zohra Aly to obtain the Zoom link.

[See all events]

GET INVOLVED

Volunteer with us

Initiatives of Change prides itself on being a big family, nationally and internationally, and there are several ways you can get involved. You are welcome to join our monthly meetings or participate in an upcoming program or event. These are continuing online, and are a great way to connect with our work!

There are a variety ways to volunteer, depending on your skills and where we have a need. If you are interested, please contact our Program Manager to learn about current volunteer and internship opportunities at Initiatives of Change Australia. We'd love to hear from you!

DONATE

The COVID-19 crisis has meant that we are holding fewer face-to-face events, and our Australia-Pacific Centre 'Armagh' in Melbourne remains closed for now. This means there are fewer opportunities to pop a note into a donation box, but the need for funds to support our community engagement around Australia—online and in people's homes or community centres, where permitted—continues. Please know that your online contribution allows Initiatives of Change Australia to sustain our trust-building and peace-building work. We value your support so much at this time.

Every donation, large or small, has a **direct impact** on the individuals and communities with whom we work. You can donate through our page here or contact the Treasurer to send a cheque or make a bank transfer.

[Donate Now]