

CO-OPERATIVELY SPEAKING

2017 ISSUE 02

Australia Day Award

The Australia Day Awards this year recognised the work of the African-Australian Women's Group based in Dandenong for their role in a pilot project developed by the African-Australian Multicultural Employment and Youth Service (AAMEYS). The project is focused on family violence prevention and to empower women from new and emerging communities.

Congratulations Wuddad and Sadda, both Endeavour CERC members, for their achievement and involvement in the project.

The group involved in the project is mostly run by voluntary workers within the Dandenong African-Australian community with support from the R.E. Ross Trust.



Martha Taye, Nafisa Abdula, Saada Ahmed, Wudad Salim, Steven Breadon and Awatif Ibrahim



Wudad Salim, Saada Ahmed and Steven Breadon

The project responds to the needs of communities facing pressure from unemployment and education challenges; religious and cultural issues and to reinforce family and Australian values.

A particular focus is to help mothers to support their children to stay at school, develop their self-esteem and increase their knowledge of appropriate support services. They also discuss health, social, religious and cultural issues. New members are joining the group and connecting to the community.

The dynamic group pictured above, received their Australia Day Award at Hampton Park in the City of Casey.

The whole community is empowered by this official acknowledgment of their contributions to the welfare of the women in the area and their families.

Article supplied by



Managing Director's Report

It has been very encouraging to see the sustained media coverage and debate regarding Australia's current affordable housing crisis. We all know that co-operative housing can be a very effective solution which sees people working together to meet their housing needs and it builds strong, supportive communities.

There have been a number of very welcome funding announcements from the Victorian Government over recent months which will increase the supply of affordable housing. They may also provide some opportunity to expand the co-operative housing program.

Under the state government framework of the new *Homes for Victorians* strategy there is a large list of initiatives, including;

- Social housing growth (pipeline of projects on government owned land, funding for projects on non-government land)
- Public housing estate renewals (1,100 homes across 9 estates)
- Public housing stock transfers to community housing providers (4,000 properties)
- Brokerage and head leasing funds (to lease properties in the rental market addressing family violence and homelessness)
- Upgrades of some existing crisis and social housing and specific earmarked housing projects (e.g., family violence and homelessness)
- Inclusionary Housing Pilot to ensure an amount of affordable housing for private development on government owned land.

A key issue which may impact on the suitability of these funds for the CEHL Program is that;

- Participating organisations must utilise a new Victorian Housing Register (VHR) which will replace a wide range of current waiting lists across public and community housing
 - 75% of future vacancies must be allocated to priority access applicants from the VHR.
 Many of the details of the initiatives are still to



Letter from the Chair

Welcome again to Co-operatively Speaking. It's such a pretty time of year with the autumn leaves, and a busy time for the CEHL Board as we transition our Strategic Plan 2020 into an expectant and comprehensive Business Plan.

As the Board prioritises activities to support the CEHL Strategic Plan 2020, we are in the process of developing an investment plan that considers the advantages available to CEHL and the way investment funds may be used to generate additional funding to benefit the Program. This is a first step in harnessing our asset value to sustain growth.

You will have already seen opportunities for co-ops and individual members to engage more deeply to embed a sustainable Program framework. This work will cultivate and strengthen the partnership between CEHL and member co-ops which is critical for our Program sustainability and viability. Thank you for taking on these opportunities to inform these important planning activities.

Much activity continues regarding Future Directions Planning, creating an informed asset planning regime through which co-ops and CEHL can explore appropriate procurement and development methodologies.

Again, it is your interaction with this planning activity that informs the partnership approach which underpins the Co-op/CEHL relationship, or as Melina Morrison of the BCCM has said, this is the "quick, quick, slow" hard work of doing democracy.

I look forward to hearing more of your input and learning with you on this journey too.

Yours in Co-operation
Karren Walker, CEHL Chairperson

be finalised and we are actively working with our peak body, the Community Housing Federation of Victoria (CHFV) as they resolve policy and implementation issues with government.

In the coming months we will provide information on the potential opportunities and implications for the program including further discussion with co-ops on how the program should move forward.

Stephen Nash, Managing Director

We're a friendly lot at Futures Co-op

We are a very friendly lot in our co-op and get on well together. We help each other out whenever we can.

Carole and I have been in co-op housing for around eight years now.

We originally moved from Leitchville (housing commission) when we were offered a two-bed unit in the Canadian Place Ballarat co-op. I needed to move due to a health reason, so we put our names on the transfer list and were offered a unit in Golden Point.

The back garden was in pretty bad shape, as you can see from the 'before' pic. The unit had been vacant for some time, and the grass had gone wild.

The original brick paving was broken and very loose and we all agreed that because it was unsafe, we needed to rip it up and cement the back section completely.

Myself, David and the guys from our co-op decided we would do the cement pour ourselves. In hindsight we should have got a cement man in to do the hard yakka. We were all exhausted for about a week after our courageous effort!

Both Carole and I love it!

As you can tell from the pics, Carole is the gardener at our place.

I am one of three Maintenance Directors in our CERC. This year is my third term as a Maintenance Director.

*Greg and Carole
Futures Co-op*

Before



After

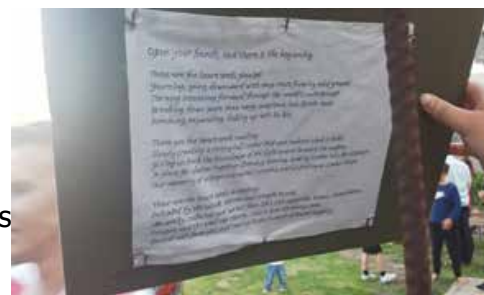




Happy 5th Birthday Murundaka Cohousing Gratitude

In Earth CERC we have a special type of co-op called a cohousing community, where 18 of our 20 homes are co-located on one site with a big Common House. On the 3rd of December 2016 we celebrated 30 years of being a housing co-op and 5 years of living in our cohousing community. This was a special time to reflect on our community and be grateful for what we have. In this spirit, we made a special 'Gratitude Gift' for our founders who have made our community possible.

Led by our most recent member, Gail, who is a textile artist; we donated clothes from our homes, boiled dye with gum leaves from our neighborhood, cut out leaves from salvaged book covers and took turns to sew it all together. We also collaborated on a poem. It was a lot of work over many weeks, but nothing compared to the energy, vision and tenacity of the earliest members who made our co-op and our community possible. To Iain Walker and Giselle Wilkinson – we thank you!



Happy 5th birthday
Murundaka cohousing
community

Thank you for inviting
me to join in your
special occasion.



article supplied by Rhonda Wilson, Endeavour

Asok's Story - Herbert Street Co-op

I am Asokumar Navaratnam from Herbert Street Village CMC Dandenong. We migrated to Australia from Sri Lanka in 2008.

Jaya and I were staying with our relatives as we could not find accommodation. We first applied for housing with the Department of Housing.

We sent in our application to CEHL through Tamil CERC in the year 2009 and we were lucky to get a property in 2010. Tamil CERC have 20 properties and we were living in Dandenong.

At the 2010 AGM I was elected to the Finance division. I was on the committee for four years, holding the Treasurer and Tenant Selection

positions. I gained considerable knowledge about running a CERC more efficiently.

We left Tamil CERC in September 2015 and joined Harmony Village CMC now known as Herbert Street CMC Dandenong.

I am the current co-op Treasurer. I am eagerly waiting to work on the new software program (Property Me) to replace CIRCUIT. The members in this village are very co-operative. We all feel we can learn a lot from the fellow members.

*Jaya and Asok
Herbert Street
Dandenong Co-op*

It must be the weather



Since the dawn of time the subject of the weather has been on our lips, in any country you can name. We have written songs and sonnets galore about weather and who can forget Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds in *Dancing in the Rain*!

Here's one of my favourite poems by an anonymous British poet :

Whether the weather be fine
Or whether the weather be not,
Whether the weather be cold,
Or whether the weather be hot,
We'll weather the weather,
Whatever the weather
Whether we like it or not.

Image supplied by Don Carpenter

And now for the weather . . .

With all the hype it's not surprising that some weather broadcasters become household names and stars in their own right. Inigo Owen Jones (1872-1954) and Llenox Walker (1925-2000) were two long range weather forecasters who were household names. With an 85% success rate they knew a thing or two about weather.

Back in the day, thousands of Australians tuned into the news and weather forecast each night. Heaven help any children who dared speak at dinner-time during the 1950s, 60s and 70s when the weather forecast was on!

Being a meteorologist in the Royal Australian Naval Reserve and the Merchant Service, I have a keen interest in weather and what makes it the most talked about subject on earth!

*Don Carpenter
Carinya Co-op*

CEHL Conference

Friday 18 August 2017

Melbourne Convention
& Exhibition Centre

The agenda for the conference is currently being developed, it will include:

- Participation Policy development workshops
- Program costs and revenue Q&A, first step in reviewing the rent model
- Engagement & communication review

A formal invitation and agenda will be sent to all households in the coming weeks.

CEHL / Co-op Engagement Review

A key part of this year's conference will be reviewing our approach to Program engagement.

In advance of the conference, co-ops and members will be provided with a background paper that sets out a range of information on each of the current engagement methods, including the purpose of the engagement, its cost and the target audience.

The conference workshop will then explore the effectiveness of the current engagement methods and opportunities to improve how we engage.

The feedback from the review will be used to inform engagement planning for 2018 and beyond.

Participation Policy Update

Nine Participation workshops were scheduled to be held across the state in May. These were engaging and lively discussions that highlighted the range of views among members on this important topic.

Thank you to all who attended.

The information gathered through the workshops is now being collated and will be used by the *Participation Policy Advisory Group* to start to shape a draft Participation Policy.

Co-ops and members will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft policy at the **CEHL Conference on Friday, 18 August**.

In advance of the conference, members are encouraged to continue the participation conversation by contributing to the online forum on the Participation Policy webpage.

To get involved, simply:

- Click on the *Have Your Say* button on the CEHL homepage
- Click the *Participation Policy* image
- Click on *Register to Have your Say* button and share your ideas in the 'Forum'

LINKS

Have your say

<http://yourview.cehl.com.au/>

NEW Program Policies

During the last policy consultation cycle, the CEHL Board approved the Program Policies outlined in the table below.

These policies replace the relevant CEHL Program Directives, as well as any previous best practice advice that relate to the topics.

Given the significance of Program Policy to the decision-making and future direction of the Program, it is vital that the views of co-ops and members are reflected in its development.

POLICY NUMBER	POLICY NAME	POLICY COVERS . . .
PM002 Version 1.0	Applications to the Program	The process for applying to the CEHL Program and how CEHL and Co-ops will manage applications from previous Program participants.
PPOL012 Version 1.0	Property Allocation to Co-ops	The criteria governing the allocation of properties to co-ops, ensuring that this is done in a fair and transparent way.
PPOL013 Version 1.0	Transfer Applications by Current Program Participants	Enables existing Program participants to transfer within the Program and ensures that such requests are considered in a consistent and fair manner, in full knowledge of the participant's relevant Program history.
PPOL014 Version 1.0	Transfer to VicWide	The circumstances in which CEHL will consider an application to transfer the management of a tenancy from a co-op to VicWide and the criteria against which an application will be assessed.

Next Policy Consultation Cycle

6 July - 17 August

The next policy consultation cycle runs from 6 July to 17 August. Please have your say by reviewing the draft policies and completing the survey on the Policy Consultation page of the CEHL website

For all the approved Policies and Procedures, check out the Policies and Procedures page under the *Co-op Resource Centre* tab of the website.

*All articles provided by
Andrew Bartlett
Manager, Program Development*

LINKS

Policy consultation

www.cehl.com.au/policy-consultation

Fact Sheets

www.cehl.com.au/policies-fact-sheets

Co-op Development & Strategy Team UPDATE

The Co-op Development and Strategy (CDS) Team are pleased to welcome two new Co-op Development Co-ordinators (CDCs) to the team; Kylie Suich and Antony McMullen. They each bring a wealth of community development experience; Kylie has led community consultations with local and state government departments and Antony has managed community projects for church organisations and played a key role in the development of a worker co-operative. Both have commenced a thorough induction and will be allocated specific co-ops by the end of June.

Sadly, we are farewelling two long-serving team members who are retiring; Jeff Cooke and Trish Reid. Jeff made a great contribution to the development of the St Mary's Project and Trish prepared applicants for co-op membership, assisted co-ops in member recruitment, and guided the re-establishment of the Training and Advisory Committee (TAC) and member training. We wish them both every happiness in the years ahead.

Melissa Crebbin has successfully applied for an opportunity within the Program Development team for a fixed term contract until December 2017.

Due to staff changes we apologise if we are unable to assign a specific co-ordinator to your co-op at this time. We are advertising for Co-op Development and Strategy Co-ordinators and hope to have a full team of CDCs assigned to each co-op in the near future.

Who to contact

For the next 3 months the CDS team will share our workload across the whole team. Team Leaders Jenni or Karen will assign your query to a team member (see table below for contact details).

We will continue to provide information and advice by phone or email and you can expect a reply within two working days.

Co-op Development & Strategy Team Leaders	
Jenni Dwyer	Karen Fixsen
03 9208 0839	03 9208 0856
0438 447 063	0438 315 858
jenni@cehl.com.au	karen@cehl.com.au

Co-op meeting attendance

We will endeavour to attend co-op meetings at your request. Please let us know if a coordinator could attend your meeting by phone or Skype, so we can minimise the team's travel commitments.

If you have any concerns about specific assistance that your co-op may require over the next few months, please contact Darina Seal, Manager, Co-op Development & Strategy, darina@cehl.com.au 03 9208 0805, 0438 447 069, or one of the team leaders to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Jenni Dwyer
Co-op Development & Strategy
Team Leader

Future Directions Project: Workshop Roll-out

The roll out of the Future Directions Project (FDP) continues apace. During April, introductory workshops were held with co-ops in the South-East Metro, Northern Metro, Western Metro, Bendigo and Gippsland regions. Sessions with some co-ops in regional areas have also commenced.

There has been a great level of engagement at each of the sessions, with a lot of enthusiasm and interest in what is an important and exciting project both for co-ops and the Program.

Co-ops that now have their workbooks are encouraged to complete them and return them to CEHL. Workbooks will then be converted into draft Co-op Plans for consideration and sign-off by co-ops and CEHL.

Co-op Plans

Agreed Co-op Plans will set out the co-op's aspirations for the next 10 years and the



Bendigo region FDP workshop

actions that will help them to achieve it. The plans will guide co-op decision-making, drive Program-wide planning decisions and inform how CEHL and co-ops work together to deliver a thriving Program.

For updates and further information on FDP, select on the link in the *Special Projects* section of the CEHL website.

Andrew Bartlett, Manager, Program Development

LINKS

Future Directions Project www.cehl.com.au/index.php?page=future-directions-project

Medicinal Herbs and Their Uses



Aloe

Parts used: leaves; externally a herb for any skin irritation i.e. sunburn rashes.

Calendula

Parts used: petals, digestive tonic, cleansing tea, used externally to treat skin conditions.

Chamomile

Parts used: flowers; calming tea, aids digestion, used externally for sunburn and rashes.

Lavender

Parts used: flowers; (may be made in oils or water) perfume, relaxing baths, sleep pillows, as an antiseptic (caution when applying oil to skin may cause damage to tender skin).

Lemon balm

Parts used: leaves; digestive tonic, nerve tonic and calming drink.

Parsley

Parts used: leaves; for vitamins (including iron) and other minerals, a diuretic and kidney tonic.

Rosehip

Parts used: hips (seed pods); seeds used as diuretic, oil from hips to treat skin complaints also juice used to make vitamin C.

Saffron

Parts used: stamens; digestive aid, diuretic, energy aid and reported to be an anti-depressant.

Thyme

Parts used: stems and leaves; tonic for coughs and colds and a good throat gargle and (mix with honey to enhance effect).

*Dr John Harrison Apocathery
(herb doctor)
Southerners Co-op*



Meet NAG

NAG is the Newsletter Advisory Group. We meet each quarter to discuss the content and development of Co-operatively Speaking.

NAG is made up of co-op member representatives, the CEHL Communications Manager and a Co-op Development and Strategy Team member. You are welcome to send in articles, information, and your stories. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Co-operatively Speaking is posted to all people in our housing Program.

How did you become part of the CEHL housing Program?

Why I joined NAG



Don Carpenter
Carinya

I joined Carinya CERC in 1995. A friend told me the CERC were looking for members and the rest they say is history.

Many years ago I was elected as the co-op delegate for the 2 Bays region. I joined NAG out of interest as I had been writing fishing stories for other publications.



John Harrison
Southerners

My family and I joined Southerners CERC in 1993. At the time our family was coping with two major challenges, the first was our son was found to be type one diabetic and I found out I have bipolar mood disorder, all of which we now manage very well. We were accepted by the CERC and received help and support from the members. My wife was a very active member in various director roles, when she died, I became involved as a director. I was also a founding member of Eureka regional group, and an early member of the Training Advisory Committee (TAC).

I am a gardener and enjoy sharing my skills and experience. I enjoy being part of a group where I can do that, as well as gain new skills by working with people.

We do not own our knowledge and skills, we are caretakers with duty to share our skills and knowledge.

I have been writing the gardening articles for *Co-operatively Speaking* and joined NAG in 2016.



Gwen Rankin
St Euphrasias

I became interested in co-operative housing after becoming disenchanted with the ups and downs of rental accommodation in the 1990s. My first contact was through an organisation called Nidus that was conducting information sessions in Geelong at that time. Without any real expectation of success, I filled in the forms they provided and kept my application updated in the years that followed. When I was eventually called for an interview and then offered CERC membership and a vacant property I was rapt, and determined to become a contributing member of the program.

I became part of NAG when CEHL newsletter (CERCUS) was being updated. I believed that my personal strengths as a professional communicator and writer meant that this was an area in which I could make the most positive contribution. I am still proud of being part of a process that saw the fledgling CERCUS (that older members may remember) become the very professional *Co-operatively Speaking* we know today.

Read more on what Gwen likes about being on NAG. . .



Sandra Castro

I'm the Communications Manager at CEHL, Chair the NAG meetings and in charge of producing *Co-operatively Speaking*.

I love hearing and sharing stories, it's an important way we learn and understand people and the world around us. Have you seen the stories shared as part of last years 30 Years Celebrations? I recommend you visit www.cehl.com.au to some inspirational stories from people in our housing program. In the meantime keep reading and sending in your stories to *Co-operatively Speaking*!

Sharon Wadeson (Bellarine CERC) is a new NAG member will share her story next edition.

Rhonda Wilson (Endeavour CERC) Rhonda has been out of action this year so far, but still sending through articles! What a champ! We wish her a speedy recovery.

Training Advisory Committee (TAC) Update



We all know what it is like when we get stuck in a meeting with no easy way to resolve an issue? How we did something in the past is not necessarily the best way to do it in the future.

Training essentially looks at different ways of doing things and hopefully makes them easier. It can make outcomes clearer and track a path to reach the outcomes.

You can learn different ways to work together on tasks that need to be done. With changes coming in the future for co-ops,

training will be an essential help. Something happens when we do a training activity, everything lights up and we all become involved. It becomes something enjoyable for everyone. It can build a sense of community and belonging. Training has the capacity to bring people together.

The vision of the Training and Advisory Committee (TAC) is to empower cooperative membership and the spirit of cooperation through learning. For TAC members, this means their purpose is to facilitate collaboration between CEHL staff and co-op members in the review and development of training activities.

In going along to my first TAC meeting in March, I was curious. What can training do for co-ops? How was it all going to work?

I was pleasantly surprised by the

open discussions. The voices of the co-op members were being heard and heads well and truly got together to look at future training needs.

I learnt that the TAC members work with the Co-operative Development Strategy (CDS) team to develop training resources and sessions that meet co-op member's needs. Recently TAC has created: the *New Members Workbook*; the 'Co-operative Principles'; and the 'Roles and Responsibilities of Directors' training. Based on feedback gathered from members that went to the Director's Training, TAC is presently working on a *Director's Workbook*.

I am excited to be part of TAC and the release of new training resources in 2017.

*Elizabeth Ellen,
TAC Chair, Kakada Co-op*

continued . . .

As one of CEHL's 'oldies' I believe that the future of Co-operatively Speaking lies in the willingness of all program members, particularly the younger ones, to get involved. If it is to keep pace with change the newsletter needs regular constructive feedback, articles and ideas from the widest range of people possible. And NAG itself needs multiple voices to maintain the lively conversations that generate each new edition. If you can spare a couple of hours four times a year, this is a great way of giving something back.

The current members of the Training Advisory Committee are:

NAME	CO-OP	REGION
John Harrison	Southerners Co-op	Ballarat
Eve Racan	Keilor Co-op	Metro North West
Elizabeth Ellen	Kakadu Co-op	Geelong
Teresa Koronczewski	Start Polish Co-op	Metro South East
Gayle Carley	Lakedale Co-op	Gippsland
Sheridan Clark	Solar City Co-op	Shepparton
Sharon Quinn	Wattletree Co-op	Metro North

TAC are seeking members to represent the Peninsula and Bendigo Regions. If you are interested in becoming a TAC member please call Jenni Dwyer, Team Leader, Co-op Development & Strategy on 9208 0839.

JUNE REGIONAL FORUM

- **Key Conversation:**
 - Member Selection Matters
- **Updates on:**
 - CEHL Organisational Update
 - March Regional Forum
 - CIRCUIT Replacement Project
 - Participation Policy
 - Development
 - Engagement Review
- **Advisory Committee Reports:**
 - Training Advisory Committee (TAC)
 - Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
 - Newsletter Adviosry Committee (NAG)
- **Preview of the 2017 CEHL: Conference**



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For more event information go to www.cehl.com.au

PARTICIPATION WORKSHOPS	
10 May	Geelong: St Marys Community Hub
11 May	Gippsland: Morwell Bowls Club
	Peninsula: Mt Martha House
12 May	Ballarat: South Community Hub
13 May	Metro North: Northcote Town Hall
19 May	Shepparton: Shepparton RSL
20 May	Metro West: Melton Library
22 May	Bendigo: Bendigo RSL
23 May	Metro South East: Herbert St, Dandenong
31 May	CEHL Board Meeting
REGIONAL FORUMS	
01 June	Geelong Regional Forum
	Shepparton Regional Forum
	Peninsula Regional Forum
05 June	Gippsland Regional Forum
06 June	Metro South East Regional Forum
07 June	Ballarat Regional Forum
	Bendigo Regional Forum
13 June	Metro West Regional Forum
14 June	Metro North Regional Forum
22 June	Training Advisory Committee (TAC)
23 June	Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
28 June	CEHL Board Meeting
26 July	CEHL Board Meeting
REGIONAL TRAINING	
01 August	Metro South East: Herbert St, Dandenong
02 August	Ballarat: South Community Hub
	Bendigo: Bendigo RSL
03 August	Geelong: St Marys Community Hub
	Shepparton: Shepparton RSL
	Peninsula: Mt Martha House
07 August	Gippsland: Morwell Bowls Club
08 August	Metro West: Melton Library
09 August	Metro North: Northcote Town Hall
18 August	CEHL Conference
30 August	CEHL Board Meeting

save
the
date®

Friday
18 August
2017

CEHL
Conference

Melbourne
Convention
& Exhibition
Centre

We invite all members to forward their stories, images, article ideas to
newsletter@cehl.com.au