# JULY 2025 IN THE HOUSE

**Open Day July 26th**

From the Ross House Team

We are so excited to share that the Open House Melbourne Program is now live, featuring Ross House Open Day on 26th July! We are running a self-guided tour from 10 am - 4 pm, where guests are invited to wander through the building to points of interest. Giving our local community the opportunity to discover the incredible work happening within our walls.

**Check out the program here:** <https://openhousemelbourne.org/event/ross-house/>

**Ticket Release Information:**

* First release tickets: 12pm Wednesday 2 July
* Second release tickets: 10am Saturday 5 July

There's still plenty of time to get involved! For more information or to discuss participation ideas, contact us at rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au.

**What's On?**

* Community Scarf Knitting with the Handknit Crochet Guild
* Get Dramatic Rolling play readings with the Victorian Drama League will showcase the art of storytelling through voice and expression.
* HAAG's History: Housing Justice for Older Tenants highlighting the stories of HAAG members and their campaigns for housing justice for older tenants.
* Ever Wondered What it's Like to Have a Brain Injury? session by BIM sharing their lived experiences and personal insights about what it's like to live with a brain injury.
* Deafblind World with Deafblind Victoria, an interactive experience designed to increase understanding and awareness of the deafblind communities.
* Accessible Seated Meditation sessions hosted by Lotus Group Projects.
* Several organisations are opening their office doors for the day, including SARU, LOTUS GROUP, VDL, DBV, and PPP. Ross House Association will be hosting the following events:
* The Community in Action Art Gallery – with displays from Schizy Inc, BCA and COSHG
* Community in Action Video Screenings – showing videos from the Ross House archive, PPP, Schizy Inc, and Mixed Nuts Media
* A History of Ross House Display in the foyer, including original blueprints!
* Changemaker Networking Event, for other not-for-profit changemakers looking to share ideas and stories, and to connect.

Check out the program here: <https://openhousemelbourne.org/event/ross-house/>

See Page 12 to learn more about the bookable events happening at Ross House.

**Included in this Issue**

* Building and Maintenance
* Melbourne Rail updates
* Colin’s Corner
* RHA Open Day
* Mid-Year Morning Tea Celebrating NAIDOC Week
* Grants and Assistance
* Update from TreeProject
* Tenant Feature:
* Deaf Victoria
* Update from CLAN
* Update from PPP
* Community Calendar

## Acknowledgment of Country

Ross House Association acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work.
We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and the traditional owners of the land on which Ross House is located.
We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

## 2025 RHA Management Committee List

## Chairperson: Colin Neave AM (ABC Friends)Treasurer: Alba Chliakhtine (ABRISA)Secretary: Denise Boyd (STAR)Ordinary Member: Ally Scott (DRC)Appointed Members: Maggie Maguire AM, Nazzareno Marchionda (RHA Staff)Ex-Officio: Michael Griffiths (RHA CEO)

## Colin's Corner

Welcome to Colin's Corner!

Colin Neave AM, Chairperson of the Ross House Association, shares some thoughts and highlights from the last couple of months.

It's been wonderful meeting so many new marvellous souls in the lifts and passageways of Ross House since my last Colin's Corner. These chance encounters are a constant reminder of the incredible work being done and of the unique and special nature of Ross House.

I'm delighted to report that a final draft for the Strategic Plan 2025-2030 has been approved by the committee after incorporating all your valuable feedback. Thank you for your supportive responses. Please check your inboxes for the final document over the next few weeks.

While it's been chilly outside, I hope that everyone has been keeping warm at Ross House. I am looking forward to a warm gathering for our NAIDOC Week event on July 10th. I am also looking forward to welcoming the public to our Open Day on July 26th. You will find more information about these events throughout this issue.

Stay warm and see you on the 10th!

Colin Neave AM, Chairperson

Ross House Association

[ID: photo of Colin Neave wearing a checkered shirt, standing in front of green foliage smiling at the camera].

## Building and Maintenance

There is always a lot going on in this big old building of ours, so please make sure you keep an eye out for the building maintenance emails that circulate regularly.

**Current and completed works:**

Over the next few weeks, Ross House will be migrating tenants and Meeting Room Wi-Fi Networks to one universal network called RH-Wi-Fi.

Every tenant will have a username and password to access this network. The reason that this is being implemented is to minimise the current number of networks on the system that has been causing congestion issues from time to time.

Nazz, our Facility Manager will be contacting every tenant regarding setting up their new Wi-Fi login over the coming weeks.

## Metro Rail Update

These are the planned and current works for the Melbourne Metro Rail Project. Construction works within the Town Hall Station precinct from June 2025 include:

* Station entrance construction and underground build-out works at the City Square, Flinders Quarter and Federation Square sites
* Ongoing fit-out of above-ground structures and civil surface works at City Square
* Flinders Street northern footpath closure for workers lift removal and station infrastructure installation
* Campbell Arcade restoration works
* Train testing through the tunnel

For more information on these works, see the [June 2025 Town Hall construction update (PDF, 1.4 MB).](https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/941386/MT-TH-Construction-Update-June-2025.pdf)

If you have any questions regarding these works, or would like more information on the project, please visit www.metrotunnel.vic.gov.au or phone 1800 551 927.

**Shred-X Secure Container Document Destruction Bin 2025**

Located near the photocopier and shared resource area on Level 3 is the new addition of a Shred-X Secure wheelie bin. This bin is for secure document destruction and replaces the old shredder machine.

Anyone who has fought with the old shredder machine when it jammed will breathe a sigh of relief to learn of this bin!

Now it’s as easy as dropping the documents you wish to be shredded into the locked bin, and they are taken away securely to be destroyed.

See below for the picture of Katie demonstrating the use of the bin.

If you have any questions about the Shred-X bin, contact Carol or Katie: rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au.

[ID: Katie places some paper documents she wishes to be destroyed securely in the top of the Shred-X bin located near the photocopier on Level 3 of Ross House].

## Tenant Feature: Welcome Deaf Victoria

## Room 4.17b

A big warm welcome to our new tenants Deaf Victoria! Deaf Victoria advocate on behalf of Deaf and hard-of-hearing Victorians to increase access to services and to educate the wider community on how to work, play and study with deaf and hard-of-hearing people. They represent deaf and hard-of-hearing people in both state government and disability groups.

**What Deaf Victoria do**

* Provide advocacy support for the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities in Victoria
* Provide an array of resources from their community library
* Provide education and consulting
* Has a Community Directory to search for community groups and services to support the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities
* Promote news and events through their social media platforms and e-newsletter

**Volunteering at Deaf Victoria**

A not-for-profit organisation since 1982, Deaf Victoria is made up of a volunteer board and a small team of paid staff. They welcome those keen to volunteer with them who may be able to contribute to their work and the broader Victorian Deaf Community.

Depending on your skills and our current areas of need, they can offer short or long-term positions for volunteers, those seeking placements to compliment study, work experience or as members of our board. Preference for these positions are given to deaf and hard-of-hearing people or those looking for a long-term career in the Deaf sector. Volunteers must be able to sign.

To find out more information about Deaf Victoria, please visit [www.deafvictoria.org.au](http://www.deafvictoria.org.au).

A Quick Welcome to FCCVic

We also welcome the Filipino Community Council of Victoria who moved into level 4 on July 1st!

[www.filipinocommunitycouncilofvic.org.au](https://www.filipinocommunitycouncilofvic.org.au)

## Grants and Assistance Programs

These are some of the grants and assistance programs currently available that we think might interest you.

**Content Grants**

**Community Broadcasting Foundation Ltd**

You can apply for a Content grant if you are a current or prospective community broadcaster who is producing content for broadcast by a recognised community media organisation.

Eligibility: Not-for-profits, Unincorporated Groups

Funding: not specified

Round: Open, closes 12 August 2025

To apply head to <https://cbf.org.au/grants/grants-available/#content-grants>

**Make the Difference! Grants Program**

**Future2**

Applications are now open for grant funding targeting financial wellbeing programs across four key areas: young Australians, disadvantaged Australians (including those experiencing mental health issues, social isolation, domestic violence, homelessness, or poverty, as well as First Nations and refugee & migrant communities), women, and those in regional and remote Australia.

**Eligibility**: Not-for-profits,

**Funding**: $10,000

**Round**: Opens 10th July, closes 21st August 2025

To apply head to <https://future2foundation.org.au/grants/future2-make-the-difference-grants/>

**Community Grants Program**

**Sisters of Charity Foundation**

These grants are aimed at helping groups who make a huge difference to those in need, but struggle to find funding through other avenues. They may be ineligible for government assistance, or be too small or lacking the right market appeal to attract the attention of larger organisations, but their causes are no less worthy and their needs are no less real.

**Eligibility**: Not-for-profits, DGR status is required

**Funding**: up to $15,000

**Round**: Open, closes 31st July 2025

To apply head to

<https://sistersofcharityfoundation.org.au/applying-for-grants/>

## Winter in the Paddock with TreeProject

## By TreeProject

TreeProject is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to revegetating Victoria, and we’ve been doing it since 1989. Our planting days are held from winter through to spring in some of the state’s most beautiful rural regions.

As the cool months roll in, there’s no better time to pull on your gumboots, grab your gloves, and head out into Victoria’s countryside to plant something that matters.

This July through to September, TreeProject invites you to spend a day out in the paddock, planting indigenous seedlings that will grow to protect our waterways, restore ecosystems, and provide vital habitat for native wildlife.

Planting days are being held in the Yarra Ranges, Melbourne surrounds, Bendigo, and Ballarat — giving you the chance to connect with the land close to home or enjoy a day trip to somewhere new.

**What to expect**

Be prepared for digging, bending, and walking on uneven ground — a good level of fitness is needed. Some days are suitable for children too, so be sure to check the event details when booking.

**Why do it?**

Each planting day is a chance to connect with nature, with others, and with the shared goal of repairing our landscapes, one seedling at a time. Whether you come with friends, family, a work crew, or solo, you’ll be warmly welcomed into a community of people getting their hands dirty for a greener future.

For more information, and to register, please visit the link below:

[**www.treeproject.org.au/how-you-can-help/tree-planting-dates**](https://treeproject.org.au/how-you-can-help/tree-planting-dates/)

**Ross House Open Day 2025 Bookings Open**

You can now book tickets for the three following bookable events happening at Ross House as part of the event on July 26th 2025. All events are FREE, the City of Melbourne charge a $7 booking and admin fee.

Head to <https://openhousemelbourne.org/event/ross-house/> to get your tickets! You can also pop in on the day and participate in the self-guided tour.

**Seated Meditation with Lotus Group Projects.**

Lotus Group is inviting people to participate in a Loving Kindness meditation, a non-religious meditation suitable for everyone regardless of belief or non-belief.

**Why offer a Loving Kindness meditation?**

The world is a troubled place and many people suffer with anxiety and/or depression; a healing remedy for assisting with overcoming these challenges is learning to appreciate or love yourself and others, by promoting inner peace.

This meditation session will show participants how to practice this loving-kindness meditation; a free take-home information and instruction kit, to practice the meditation at home, will also be provided. There will be additional free kits created for interested people who cannot make the Open Day. They can be collected from the Lotus Group Projects office on Level 3.

For more information, please contact Lyn on 0413239236. We hope to see you there!

**Deafblind World with DeafBlind Victoria.**

Hosted by DeafBlind Victoria (DBV), DeafBlind World is an interactive workshop designed to help the wider community understand what it's like to live with deafblindness.

Presented by DeafBlind people, this hands-on experience covers DeafBlind communication methods, assistive technology, barriers and access issues, guiding techniques, and much more through engaging live activities.This workshop welcomes everyone, including Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing participants, CODA (Children of Deaf Adults), Auslan learners, Auslan teachers, Auslan community members, and more.

Auslan interpreters and morning tea will be provided. Please provide your communication preferences to rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au.

**Changemakers Mixer with Ross House Association**

The RHA Community Development Subcommittee is hosting a networking event for local changemakers who are looking to connect and share skills and knowledge with others. Afternoon tea will be provided.

## The Disabled Experience of Mental Health

## By Schizy Inc

Celebrate Disability Pride Month with Darebin Libraries and Ross House tenant, Schizy Inc.

Schizy Inc. is a disability lived experience-led arts organisation, which facilitates the proud expression of diverse mental health in Australia.

Mental health disability advocate Heidi Everett will host a panel discussion with Australia’s leading Disabled Arts and Advocacy professionals - Carly Findlay, Jael Espinal, Rachel Edmonds and Laura Pettenuzzo with performances from Schizy Inc artists.

If you have any access, dietary or transport requirements, such as Auslan interpreting, dim lighting or taxi vouchers, please contact heidi@schizy.org by 4th July 2025.

This is a sensory gentle event, please refrain from wearing scents. Please note, a Guide Dog will be present at this event.[**www.schizy.org**](http://www.schizy.org)

Where? Reservoir Library, 23 Edwardes Street Reservoir

When? Saturday 19th July 2025, 1pm - 3:30pm

For more information about tickets, please visit the QR code link below.

<https://libraries.darebin.vic.gov.au/News-and-events/Events/Events-calendar/Eventbrite/Kind-Society-%E2%80%93-The-Disabled-Experience-of-Mental-Health-1383386519319>

## Empowering Parents with Intellectual Disability – PPP

A huge congratulations to Positive Powerful Parents (PPP) who made it into the Link Disability Magazine!

The article is called ‘Empowering Parents with Intellectual Disability’ and is about Positive Powerful Parents sharing their stories about the issues and discrimination parents with intellectual disability face, when they are involved with the child protection system.

You can access the magazine via the below link:

[www.linkonline.com.au](http://www.linkonline.com.au)

PPP’s article is featured on pages 34 & 35.

For more information about PPP, please visit [www.positivepowerfulparents.com.au](http://www.positivepowerfulparents.com.au)

## CLAN’s 25th Anniversary!

**by Care Leavers Australasia Network (CLAN)**

On Saturday 5th July at the Petersham RSL in Sydney, NSW CLAN will celebrate 25 years of service to Care Leavers with Clannies, their partners, CLAN Supporters and Patrons.

Saturday 5th July 2025 celebrations include:

* 9:30am: Registration
* 10am: Start time
* 11am: Morning tea
* 1pm: Lunch ‘

Dinner will commence at 6:30pm. On the night, there will be speeches, a 25th Anniversary powerpoint detailing our work, a small raffle with prizes to be won, items from The Australian Orphanage Museum on display and more! CLAN looks forward to celebrating 25 years with ALL attendees!

RSVP by Friday 19th June to CLAN to reserve your spot at this wonderful celebration by calling 1800 008 774

[www.clan.org.au](http://www.clan.org.au)

## Kathryn Purnell

**by Poetry Prize**

**by Society Women Writers Victoria**

Each year the Society of Women Writers Victoria (SOWW) runs a competition, alternating between poetry and short stories. This year was the Kathryn Purnell Poetry Prize, which closed in May. We received 147 entries from women poets across Australia!

In July, we will meet at Ross House, in the Hayden Raysmith Room for the announcement of the winners.

We will hear from our judge, Alice White, and the winning poems will be read out as well as others on the shortlist, where possible by the authors who are invited to attend along with our members.

**Where?** Hayden Raysmith Room, Level 4, Ross House

**When?** Friday 18th July 2025, 11am - 1pm

For more information about SOWW, please visit

[**www.swwvic.org.au**](http://www.swwvic.org.au)

**Volunteer with Travellers Aid Australia**

When you volunteer with Travellers Aid you help people with a disability or older travellers’ get where they need to go.

If you value access and inclusion for all, you’ll love being part of our volunteer workforce.

Volunteers, just like you, make Travellers Aid’s free and low-cost support services possible.

Our service hubs in Melbourne, Seymour and Ballarat help people connect with public transport, navigate transport disruptions, get to their appointments and outings and enjoy Melbourne’s special events.

To find out more about volunteering at Travellers Aid, please visit:

[**www.travellersaid.org.au/support-us/volunteer**](http://www.travellersaid.org.au/support-us/volunteer)

**Manimuthu’s Story: Finding Strength and Connection Again**

by Assisi Aids Projects

Our work at Assisi Aid Projects is simple but powerful; we support women to build livelihoods and live with dignity. So far this year, we have seen hundreds more women in rural India, Nepal and Indonesia access training, develop small businesses, and gain financial independence - often for the first time in their lives. We are proud to share Manimuthu’s inspiring story in this newsletter.

Manimuthu, a 57-year-old widow in Tamil Nadu, India, has faced many of the challenges common to widows and single women. With little support and few chances to earn an income or feel part of their community, women can become isolated, taking a serious toll on their health, confidence, and sense of self-worth.

In partnership with Integrated Development Trust, and supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), our project in India encourages women like Manimuthu to rebuild their confidence, understand their rights, and tap into their entrepreneurial potential.

Being an active member of the Single Women’s Project has created significant change in Manimuthu’s life. After taking part in a hands-on training program to learn how to make mats and bags, Manimuthu used an interest-free business loan to start her own small business. Now, Manimuthu’s earning a steady income from the bags and mats she makes and sells.

For Manimuthu, “The Single Women’s Project group and the training helped me feel strong and respected. My family now includes me in all decisions, and I feel proud to be part of village meetings”.

[**www.assisi.org.au**](http://www.assisi.org.au)

**First Aid Recap at Ross House**

A sneaky peek at our first aid session from last month with our brilliant trainer Ben! It was fantastic learning new skills on how to respond effectively in emergencies and build knowledge that could genuinely save lives and prevent further harm.

We're planning another first aid training session in the coming months, so we'll keep you posted on when that'll be happening. Huge thanks to Ben for his expertise, and to everyone who came along!

## Community Calendar

**JULY 2025**

Thursday 15th May: Global Accessibility Awareness Day

Wednesday 21st May: World Day for Cultural Diversity

Monday 24th May: World Schizophrenia Day (see below)

Monday 26th May: National Sorry Day

Monday 26th May: First Aid Session for tenants at Ross House

Tuesday 27th May - Tuesday 3rd June: National Reconciliation Week

**AUGUST 2025**

Monday 4th August - Annual Report Article Call Out

Monday 4th August - National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

Monday 11th August - National Day of Action Against Bullying & Violence

Tuesday 19th August - World Humanitarian Day

Friday 29th August - Wear it Purple Day

**SEPTEMBER 2025**

Friday 5th September - International Day of Charity

Wednesday 10th September - World Suicide Prevention Day

Thursday 11th September - RUOK Day

Tuesday 23rd September - Bi Visibility Day

Tuesday 23rd September - International Day of Sign Languages

Friday 26th September - RHA Office Closed for Public Holiday

**If you would like to add your event to our Community Calendar, in our next In the House, please email rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au or phone (03) 9650 1599**

## RHA Update

## By RHA

It's been a busy old time in this big building of ours. As we enter the second half of the year, working on events, projects, grant applications (and soon to be, gasp, AGM season), we'd like to take a moment to reflect on our achievements over the past year.

With the winery now steadily underway, we'll start to see the benefits it will have on our community through proposed upgrades to the building and community spaces in line with our new five-year strategic plan. This is now finalised and available to view here:

<https://rosshouse.org.au/app/uploads/2025/07/RHA-Stategic-Plan-2025-2030-Final-Ver.pdf>

RHA has been busy addressing some of the teething issues with the winery – we thank you all for your patience on this matter as we continue to improve operations.

We've also begun work on our new Community Development Plan based on feedback from our community discussion sessions last year. We'll be planning some community consultations for the draft version, so watch out for more information in the coming weeks.

The team has also been working hard in the lead-up to 'Stories of the City', the City of Melbourne Open Day on 26th July! View the programme here: <https://openhousemelbourne.org/event/ross-house/> and get in touch if you'd like to participate, there's still time!

Finally, we're excited to welcome two wonderful new tenants to Level 4: Deaf Victoria and Filipino Council of Victoria. Make sure you say g'day if you see them around the place!

## Equipment Grant Success Stories

Two years ago, RHA introduced a new initiative to support tenants in their work with the RHA Equipment Grant, which is currently offered twice per year.

Tenants can apply for equipment through the grant, and successful applicants are selected by the Community Development Sub-Committee.

We'd like to congratulate the recipients who have been selected as part of this initiative: DRC, ABRISA, Mixed Nuts Media, BIM, ANTaR, Hand Knit & Crochet Guild, Assisi AIDS Projects and Schizy Inc.

Recipients have received funding for a range of equipment such as laptops, printers, lighting equipment and IT software.

The next round opens in August, seep an eye out for an email.

For more information and/or support & feedback on the application process, please contact Ruby on r.jamestrawhan@rosshouse.org.au

## 2025 Window Displays

The Ross House team would once again like to thank the members for their wonderful window displays!

We know how much effort and planning goes into each display and it’s always exciting to see how the space is cleverly utilised to best effect!

In May we had eye-catching displays from the Hand Knit & Crochet Guild and the Disability Discrimination Legal Service.

During June we’ve had great displays from ABRISA who celebrated their lively Brazilian festival mid-month, and Elder Rights Australia. You would have no doubt seen these displays as you entered Ross House recently, but if not, please check out the photos of their proud displays.

June is a big month for DeafBlind Victoria, and for the reason their display has shared the month with ABRISA. This display coincides with DeafBlind Awareness Week (22nd June to 28th June) and also celebrates Helen Keller’s birthday which is June 27th.

In July the window will continue to house the display from DeafBlind Victoria and will be joined by Tree Project.

Looking ahead! We are now fully booked with the year’s window displays! Thank you to everyone for their enthusiasm in filling our window.

If you would like to find out more information about our window displays, please get in touch with Carol at rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au.

**Friendly Reminder about Phone Booth Bookings**

Are you new to Ross House or need some information about our phone booth?

Located on Level 3, the Phonebooth is a free-to-use, soundproof space for phone calls and remote meetings. It contains a desk, two chairs, and Wi-Fi access, and is the perfect spot to take those private calls.

Access to the room is via a 4-digit code provided on booking. Please book online to avoid any confusion and to obtain this code.

As the room is designed for spur-of-the-moment convenience, the following booking restrictions apply:

* Bookings can only be made in blocks of max 2 hours
* Bookings can only be made within a two-week period
* Exclusive to tenants - maximum of three people, excluding interpreters

Please get in contact with us if you have any questions or issues accessing the space.

We are also interested to learn if there is anything we could do to improve the space, so if you have any suggestions please let us know.

We hope that you enjoy the space!

Thanks

The Ross House team

**Meeting Rooms**

A friendly reminder to all Meeting Room Users to return chairs and tables to their original positions after use.

The RHA team also has a portable vacuum cleaner, if required, for hire which can be borrowed from the Front Desk.

Thank you for your

understanding!

Thanks,

The Ross House team

## Join the Community Development Sub-Committee

Members and tenants are invited to join the RHA Community Development Sub-Committee (or CD Sub-Committee). This sub-committee looks after community engagement initiatives based on the CD principles of inclusion, consultation and collaboration, and brings recommendations to the main committee.

The RHA Community Development Sub-Committee meets every couple of months and we're currently working on a five-year CD plan to make sure we can achieve the community actions in our new Strategic Plan. We also plan events, community consultations, and have begun discussions around creating improved social spaces. If you're interested in joining please reach out to us at rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au.

If you don't have time to join but have some ideas for engagement we'd also love to hear from you!

**ROSS HOUSE ASSOCIATION STAFF**
Thank you for your continued support!

* **Michael Griffiths**
*CEO*
Email: michael.griffiths@rosshouse.org.au
* **Nazzareno Marchionda**
*Facilities Manager*
Email: n.marchionda@rosshouse.org.au
* **Ruby James-Strawhan**
*Membership & Engagement Officer*
Email: r.jamesstrawhan@rosshouse.org.au
* **Junxia Xu**
*Finance Officer*
Email: junxia.xu@rosshouse.org.au
* **Katie Stadtfeld Cunnane**
*Communications & Administration Officer*
Email: rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au
* **Carol Franklin**
*Administration Support Assistant*
Email: rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au

Casual Staff: Patti Gerkens & Olivia Muscat