

AUGUST 2025

## Caffeine and connections firing up

### Welcome to the August edition of Evergreen Connections

And just like that, it's August already, which means we're on the slippery slope to the end of the year. But we're not wishing 2025 away just yet, as there's still plenty more to look forward to!

Our next big thing is the launch of our Evergreen Connections Cafe & Information Hub on August 7. We're excited about this space and are looking forward to seeing a lot of smiling faces at the launch - more about this on page 2.

The first week of August is Loneliness Awareness Week, and we have a lovely story from our Evergreen Connections Visits program (page 3) that shows how a little friendship can go a long way. We also look at our community partnerships - FoodFilled on page 6 and NeuroHearing on page 4 - and celebrate our student volunteers on page 2. Not to mention the usual lineup of bus outings and exercise classes, plus a hilarious photo of what happens when staff members find a box of wigs - there's never a dull moment!

As always, we look forward to seeing you soon!

- The Balwyn Evergreen Centre Team

### Save the Date - High Tea at Balwyn Evergreen

**Wednesday, October 8, from 1pm-4pm | Cost: \$25 per ticket**

Yes, it's early, but we're already getting enquiries about our famous High Tea to celebrate the Victorian Seniors Festival! We've got another fun event planned with fantastic food and fabulous entertainment.

If you'd like to join our waitlist, please put your name down at the office, and we'll be in touch in September to confirm and collect payment.

## Upcoming Events & Info Sessions

### Evergreen Connections Café and Information Hub Official Launch

**Thursday, August 7**

**1.30pm-3.30pm**

*Join us as we officially launch our new community hub! Featuring live music, finger food, coffee (of course) and exercise demonstrations, come along and soak up the Balwyn Evergreen atmosphere. If you're curious about our new renovation, then the doors are open for you to come and have a look through! This event is free and everyone is welcome!*

*Thanks to Bendigo Bank and City of Boroondara for funding this project.*

### Audiology Pop Up with NeuroHearing Monday, August 25

**10am-12pm**

*Book a free 10-minute hearing assessment with audiologist Weicen Yan of NeuroHearing Audiology in Canterbury.*

**Information sessions are FREE to attend and open to everyone but please book your spot with the office. Please arrive 10 minutes before the start and check in with the office.**



## Channel 31 back at Balwyn Evergreen

A whirlwind touched down at Balwyn Evergreen in the form of Carol O'Halloran from Channel 31 last month. It was a frenetic day gathering footage for her show, *Over 50, So What!* In the spotlight were our new renovation, our Evergreen Connections Cafe & Information Hub and our Supported Lifestyle Program. Thanks to our clients, volunteers, and staff who agreed to be interviewed.

**Stay tuned for the first show in late August - we'll share this far and wide!**



# NEWS CORNER

Updates From the Balwyn Evergreen Centre Community

## A place for our community to make Evergreen Connections

In case you missed it, the Evergreen Connections Cafe & Community Hub is being officially launched into the world on Thursday, August 7. We're looking forward to seeing many clients and community partners there. This bright and interactive space has been taking shape over the past few weeks, and our clients have been enjoying getting used to the coffee machine.

### How will Evergreen Connections work?

Post August 7, the space will be in full swing. It will be used for our groups to enjoy morning or afternoon tea after exercise, and for our Supported Lifestyle Program to use for entertainment and activities on Wednesdays and Fridays.

It's been great to see clients staying a bit longer after exercise, having a coffee and chatting.

On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, the space will be open for the community to hold their own groups, such as cards, play readings or book club. It will be the go-to place for information and the location for more intimate information sessions.

Of course, it will also be a place for people to find connection and conversation. In particular, volunteers and recipients in our Evergreen Connections Visits program, aka the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS), can have their visits there. This is what Evergreen Connections is all about - providing a dedicated space for people to feel welcome and included outside of our social groups.

For clients of Balwyn Evergreen, the coffee machine is free to use during their scheduled activities. Outside of these times, please support us with a gold-coin donation.

Thank you to Community Bank Inner East and City of Boroondara for making this project possible.

**Join us on Thursday, August 7, from 1.30pm-3.30pm for the launch. All welcome - RSVP to the office.**



## Tan's Green Showroom

We're excited to add even more greenery to our Evergreen space, thanks to the wonderful Tan Sun and her business, Tan's Greenhouse.

You might remember Tan from her epic plant stall at our Open Day in March, or from her fantastic volunteering with our Wednesday Supported Lifestyle group...

Now she's kitting out our centre with her beautiful and incredibly well-priced plants, with 20% of sales donated to Balwyn Evergreen!

The plants and pots are available to buy from the office during business hours, with prices clearly marked on both. To keep the plants looking tip top, please don't water or touch - Tan will be in weekly to look after them.

**Please support Tan and Balwyn Evergreen by buying a plant or two for your collection!**



## Shout out to our student volunteers

For National Student Volunteer Week (August 4-10), we're saying a massive thank you to all our volunteers who, among other things, are also studying!

As if furthering their education wasn't enough, they also show up each week and lend a hand to us on-site and in the community.

Pictured from left are Chen (Iris) and Yiwei (Evita), who are on placement as part of their Master of Social Work degree. They've fast become valuable members of the team, helping with everything from going on the outings to assisting with client care plans.

The diverse range of experiences gained here will have them well-equipped for whatever comes next.



# SPOTLIGHT

on Fostering Friendship

This month, we're taking a detour from Life Stories to explore our Evergreen Connections Visits program and the genuine connections it's fostering.

Shared stories and culture - how **Giti Mohajeri** and **Perin Anklesaria** found friendship in their home away from home.

## Raising awareness

Balwyn Evergreen is marking Loneliness Awareness Week (August 4-10) by highlighting the power of connection through the Evergreen Connections Visits program, which is part of the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS). This impactful program, which connects volunteer visitors with older people, has brought joy and meaning to many lives. Among these inspiring stories is the special bond between Giti Mohajeri and Perin Anklesaria.

## A shared history

Giti Mohajeri, 66, began volunteering with Balwyn Evergreen about six months ago, seeking purpose and connection in retirement. A proud Persian woman from Iran, mother of two and grandmother of two, Giti's love of cooking and socialising made her a natural fit for volunteering at Balwyn Evergreen, where she bakes savoury treats and shares her time with clients and staff. However, it was her match with 84-year-old Perin Anklesaria that made her role even more meaningful. "We are from similar cultures, so we just clicked," Giti says. "We talk a lot about our backgrounds, our memories, and we love going out for coffee together. I even visit her at home, and we have had afternoon tea and gone out to an Indian restaurant. It's become a real friendship."

They spend time together at Balwyn Evergreen, after Giti's baking commitments and Perin's exercise class, which is always a morning well spent.

A long-time client of Balwyn Evergreen, Perin enjoys the lively atmosphere and has always embraced the chance to meet new people. She says her friendship with Giti has added a special layer to her experience at Balwyn Evergreen.



"I live with my daughter and her family, but having Giti to talk to is wonderful," Perin said.

"We have so much in common and never run out of things to chat about - especially food and culture. I have always been a very social person, and meeting someone like Giti has been such a bonus to my life."

## A social mission

Balwyn Evergreen CEO Tina Hogarth-Clarke says Giti and Perin's connection represents the heart of the Evergreen Connections Visits program.

"Loneliness doesn't discriminate - it affects people of all backgrounds, ages and circumstances," Tina says.

"Programs such as Evergreen Connections Visits allow us to create meaningful connections that are built on shared culture, understanding and kindness."

Funded by the Australian Federal Government, Evergreen Connections Visits pairs volunteer visitors with eligible older people who may be feeling lonely or socially isolated. Through regular visits, volunteers and their recipients form companionships that help combat loneliness and improve wellbeing.

"Giti joined to give back to her community, however, in doing so, she found a new friendship," Tina says.

"It's a beautiful reminder that the simple act of showing up can change a life, sometimes two."

## A scheme focused on friendship

Like all good things, friendship grows over time. Through the Evergreen Connections Visits program, we've been fortunate to see genuine friendships like Giti and Perin's develop and flourish. These stories are truly heart-warming and show how a little kindness goes a long way in addressing loneliness. If you'd like to join the program as a volunteer or recipient, please contact the office.



# HEALTH & WELLBEING

Healthy Ageing with Balwyn Evergreen Centre

## Free hearing specialist check-up

Being able to hear isn't something that we should take for granted, which is why having regular check ups with an audiologist is vital to keep us tuned into our surroundings.

Over time, hearing loss can even raise the risk of dementia and cognitive decline as the brain misses out on vital processing cues.

Early detection and management of any hearing problem helps maintain social engagement, mental stimulation, and may lower the risk of dementia.

With this in mind, we've teamed up with NeuroHearing audiologists to provide a FREE initial hearing check at the Balwyn Evergreen Clinic, delivered by Principal Audiologist Weicen Yan.

NeuroHearing takes a personalised and integrated approach to audiology that goes beyond basic hearing.

"By integrating hearing care with techniques that engage the brain, I help clients not only hear better but also experience clearer, more meaningful interactions with the world around them," Weicen says.



Weicen Yan

### Book a FREE Specialist Hearing Assessment Today!

**Monday, August 25, from 10am-12pm**

Hearing Clinic covers:

- Hearing loss screening
- Earwax checks
- Hearing aid cleaning and troubleshooting

Book a 10-minute appointment at the office (9826 9681) or [office@balwynevergreen.org.au](mailto:office@balwynevergreen.org.au). Please arrive five minutes before your appointment and check in at the office.

**NeuroHearing is at 215 Canterbury Rd, Canterbury. For more information, visit their website: [neurohearing.com.au](http://neurohearing.com.au)**

## Work your social muscles

If you'd like to enjoy your group exercise class with a friend, invite them to try one with you! If you refer a friend, both you and your friend will get your next/first class free. It's our little way of saying thanks. If you have someone you'd like to refer, simply bring them along, or pass their details on to the office, and we'll do the rest. Our exercise program is a great way to spend time with friends, especially with our new coffee machine up and running!



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*with Ruby Cheung*

Hello! I hope everyone has had a chance to enjoy some winter sun and top up their Vitamin D while it's not raining. During the cooler months, when we're bundled up and spending more time indoors, it's easy to miss out on sunshine.

As we age, our bodies become less efficient at making this vital nutrient. Vitamin D helps keep our bones strong, our balance steady, and our immune system healthy. During winter in the southern parts of Australia, where UV radiation levels are lower, we need about two to three hours of sunlight each week on the face, arms, and hands - or an equivalent area of skin - to maintain healthy Vitamin D levels. Remember, sun protection is still needed whenever the UV index is 3 or higher.

If you have difficulty getting outdoors, you can also support your Vitamin D levels with foods such as oily fish, eggs, and fortified milk or cereals. In some cases, supplements may be needed, but speak to your doctor first.

*Ruby Cheung is a registered nutritionist who has a Master's in Nutrition and Population Health. Along with contributing to our newsletter, she's also an Evergreen Connections volunteer visitor and was our Men's Kitchen Class facilitator.*



## Hands-on tech support

If you've got a tech issue that's irking you, such as downloading apps, email glitches, or just finding your way around your device, we can help! Thanks to the Be Connected program and our Operations Lead, Bo, digital literacy is part of our social support individual (SSI) offering. Don't let your tech get the better of you!

**Digital Support sessions run on Mondays from 1.30pm-2.30pm. To find out more, contact the office.**



# DAY TRIPS

## Tuesday Bus Outings

### Enjoy a day out with friends

Our Evergreen Ramblers Program takes you on a tour around Melbourne's outer metropolitan area every Tuesday. Discover or revisit lovely suburbs and townships, stopping to enjoy lunch together at an eatery that we've hand-picked for you. Transport is in our iconic minibus, with pick up and drop off at your doorstep, so all you need to do is get comfortable and enjoy the ride.

**Bookings essential - please call/email to save your seat**

### August Outings

#### Tuesday, August 5

**BEACONSFIELD:** Pink Hill Hotel **Early Start 9am**

There's nothing better than a pub meal, and in this area, the Beaconsfield's Pink Hill Hotel excels. The comprehensive menu offers everything from tapas to seafood and includes a seniors' menu with a selection of courses. But before we sit down for lunch, we'll enjoy the drive south, finding a nice green spot to stop for morning tea. With nature reserves as the backdrop, this promises to be an enjoyable day out.

#### Tuesday, August 12

**BEVERIDGE:** Club Mandalay **Early Start 9am**

Club Mandalay is part of the new lifestyle development north of the city. Set among the fairways of the dedicated golf course, this slick, modern building offers a retreat vibe and an excellent menu of Australian favourites. We'll enjoy a social lunch in this manicured setting, then take the opportunity to check out the development before enjoying the ride home.

#### Tuesday, August 19

**MOONEE PONDS:** Brunetti Classico Moonee Ponds

Brunetti Classico Moonee Ponds offers a boutique-style experience perfect for quick, convenient visits. This charming location brings the renowned Italian craftsmanship to Moonee Ponds, with an irresistible selection of handcrafted cakes and freshly brewed coffee. During the drive, we'll peruse the inner-northern suburbs from the comfort of buses, which offer an excellent vantage point to watch the melting pot of cultures.

#### Tuesday, August 26

**YARRAMBAT:** Tancks Corner

Set among rolling hills, Yarrambat feels like a world away from the hustle of the city. We'll meander our way there, stopping for morning tea along the way, then head to Tancks Corner for lunch. This local eatery prides itself on sourcing fine, Australian-made and farmed produce from local suppliers and various other small businesses around Victoria.

### Outings newsletter - plan your next trip

If you'd like a copy of the extended Outings Newsletter, which gives you a sneak peek up to October 2025, please contact [elise.walle@balwynevergreen.org.au](mailto:elise.walle@balwynevergreen.org.au).

- Pick up from 9.30am (unless stated)
- Drop off at about 4pm
- Bus cost: \$28 (CHSP assessed + approved), \$36 non-assessed
- Lunch and tours additional cost (POA)
- Let us know if you have a food allergy or special dietary requirements
- Outings require a minimum of six people to go ahead

### Out and about...

A snapshot of our recent outings

During a morning tea break last month, the group asked about artificial intelligence (AI). What is it and how do you use it? So with a few playful prompts, Lucia and the crew came up with this whimsical rhyme...



#### The Balwyn Evergreen Ballad A Poem of Outings, Biscuits & Space

At Balwyn Evergreen, the days are bright,  
With seniors in sneakers, ready for flight.  
Each week we embark, full of good cheer -  
Adventure awaits, the outing is near!

Our chariot comes with a roar and a flare,  
A dragon with wings and peppermint hair.  
We climb on its back, Voula calls roll,  
She's packed all the biscuits - jam-filled and whole.

To Mars we might go, to the Moon we might glide,  
With Neil Armstrong's ghost waving from side.  
We picnic on craters, we lunch in the stars,  
And sometimes we nap in the rings around Mars.

Our driver, one-legged, dashing and bold,  
Claims he's the finest to ever behold.  
He winks in the mirror, sings songs from the past -  
And takes every turn just a little too fast.

There once was a trip where we all went to swim,  
But Voula forgot most of our things on a whim.  
So into the water we plunged with delight -  
The moon saw our backsides aglow in the night!

Laughter erupts with every new ride,  
With biscuits and joy tucked deep inside.  
We're seniors, it's true - but don't be misled,  
We've more mischief and spark than folks half our stead!

So here's to the centre that keeps us alive,  
To dragon-back journeys and swimwear-less dives.  
To Voula, our baker, and our dashing old guide -  
At Balwyn Evergreen, we truly take pride!

## FoodFilled partnership rescuing food and delivering impact

Working with other charities and seeing the impact is one of the reasons we get out of bed in the morning.

Since February 2023, we've been in partnership with food rescue charity FoodFilled, receiving a weekly delivery of fresh produce that would otherwise go to landfill. This fresh and local produce is then turned into the meals and baked goods that set our social support programs apart from the rest.

Much like us, FoodFilled relies on volunteers to drive their mission of tackling two critical issues facing Victoria: food waste and food insecurity.

By collecting surplus food from retailers and redistributing it to those in need, FoodFilled strives to create a more sustainable and equitable food system.

Its passionate team of volunteers rescues unsold, excess, or leftover food from small, independent food retailers and delivers it directly to local charities.

Unlike larger food rescue organisations, FoodFilled prioritises inclusivity by partnering with smaller food businesses that might otherwise be overlooked... like Balwyn Evergreen! Much like the food cycle, this partnership continues to give back – from the food rescued to the meals served, and none of it would be possible without the tireless work of volunteers.

It makes the food enjoyed by our community even better.



## Laughter is the best medicine

Raymond, Kerri, and students Iris and Evita hammed it up during the Wednesday Supported Lifestyle Program recently. They found a box of wigs, then proceeded to make it part of the program. Fun, friendly and always entertaining, that's how we roll!!

## Aged Care Number collection

Further to our obligations with the changes to aged care, we are now required to collect and store your Aged Care Number on file. Also known as an Aged Care ID, or AC Number, it's a unique reference number assigned to you when you initially register with My Aged Care (MAC). The number begins with 'AC' and is on all your correspondence from MAC.

***Please provide your AC Number to the office when you get the chance.***

## AGED CARE UPDATE



## Support at Home Information Session

Thank you to everyone who came to our information session – *Changes in Aged Care: Support at Home and what it means for you* - last month. We had a fantastic turnout, which shows the appetite for information on this topic.

Deb Coddington, from Health Ability Box Hill, delivered an informative presentation that elicited plenty of questions afterwards. A huge thank you to Deb for giving us a good overview of what we know so far with Support at Home. While we don't have all the answers around this complex topic, we're doing our best to stay on top of things as they're released. We hope to do another information session later in the year, most likely after November 1.

***In the meantime, if you'd like a copy of the presentation notes emailed to you, please contact the office.***



# EXERCISE & SOCIALISE

at Balwyn Evergreen Centre

Join our popular classes, led by dedicated instructors, and enjoy a social morning or afternoon tea with your group and trainer afterwards.

If you're new to exercise with us, your first class is FREE!

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>11.30am</b> Exercise to Music with Jo G <i>**August time change**</i>	<b>9.30am</b> Challenge Your Balance with Denise	<b>10.15am</b> Seated Strength Exercise with Raymond	<b>9.30am</b> Men's Exercise with Tom	<b>10am</b> Tai Chi with Lilei
<b>12pm</b> Seated Strength Exercise with Raymond	<b>11.30am</b> Seated Exercise to Music with Jo M	<b>10.15am</b> Strength Exercise with Tom	<b>9.30am</b> Movement to Music with Jo M <i>**45 minute class**</i>	<b>11am</b> Seated Strength Exercise with Yanmei
	<b>1.45pm</b> Seated Strength Exercise with Raymond	<b>11.30am</b> Line Dancing with Jo C	<b>1pm-3.30pm</b> Table Tennis self run	<b>11am</b> Pilates with Jo M
	<b>1.45pm</b> Strength Exercise with Tom		<b>2.30pm</b> Meditation & Yoga with Elizabeth	

## Legend

Gentle

Moderate

Active

## Cost of Group Classes

\$12 CHSP assessed and approved

\$16 non assessed

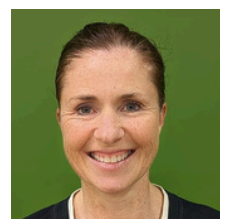
Meet our team of qualified trainers who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to our exercise programs.

They're always on hand for a chat to discuss your requirements and goals.

**For more information, please contact our Exercise Coordinator, Raymond.**



Raymond K



Denise Mokasdi

## Evergreen Gym Studio + Personal Training

### Small Group Circuit Sessions

Thursdays 11am & 1.15pm (45 mins)

### Personal Training

Contact Raymond to arrange day/time

## Notes

- Please check the online Activities Calendar for any timetable changes
- Refer a friend to an exercise class and your next class is free
- Make sure you wear appropriate sneakers. Sandals are not permitted

## Falls Prevention Program

A 12-week progression program improve strength, balance and flexibility.

- 40-minute classes
- six people max per session
- With Elevate Physiotherapists

Talk to Raymond about joining the next round.



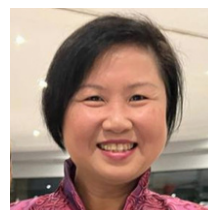
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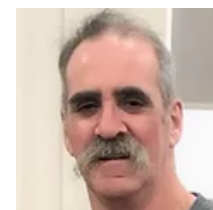
Jo Morris



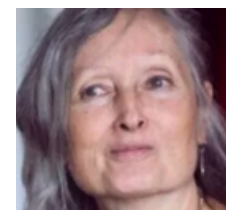
Jo Golds



Lilei Enright



Tom Scott



Elizabeth Mackenzie

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## Bakers are the secret ingredient

Our volunteer bakers are a special bunch. Rosie (pictured) was happy to whip up some sugar-free treats recently as a nod to Diabetes Week, which rolled into International Cake Day. However, we don't need a notable date to celebrate our volunteers, because they consistently go above and beyond. Our programs are enriched with the magic of home-made goodies – it's the icing on the cake of our social groups. Next time you enjoy a morsel or a meal with us, it's thanks to an amazing volunteer.



## Support our work with a donation



As a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, we rely on donations from our community to keep the wheels at Balwyn Evergreen turning. If you're able to, please consider making a donation – all contributions go towards supporting the delivery of our programs and services that, in turn, support our community. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible and an official receipt will be provided. Thanks for your support!

## Transport policy

As a reminder, we require written or verbal notification of cancellation of our local transport and outing services by 9am on the day of the booking. Failure to notify us will incur the full one-way pick-up fee of \$10 in zone or \$15 out of zone.

**Any questions, please contact the office or talk to your program coordinator.**

## Join our mailing list

Enjoy our newsletter online by signing up to our mailing list either by contacting the office or on our website!

## CYBER SNIPPETS

with Bo Cui

How can you add an extra layer of protection to your important accounts?



This month, we discuss two-factor authentication (2FA) and caution about using public Wi-Fi.

### Use Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)

- 2FA adds a second layer of security (like a texted code) when logging into important accounts
- Enable it on email, banking, and other sensitive accounts

### Avoid Public Wi-Fi for Banking

- Public Wi-Fi in cafés or hotels isn't secure
- Save online banking for your home network or use a secure mobile data connection

*Bo Cui is the Operations Lead at Balwyn Evergreen and also our resident tech whizz. He runs the Be Connected digital training program that offers one-to-one sessions on whatever tech problems are irking you. To book with Bo, please contact the office.*

## Heading away? send us a text!



You can now contact us by text message to let us know of any illness or planned absences. Make sure you include your name and relevant details. This is a text-only service, please don't call this number. If you'd like us to call you back, please state this in the message.

**Mobile: 0451 516 079**

## Flu season safety

It's still winter and you can help protect yourself and your community by getting your flu vaccine and Covid booster. The vaccines are free for people aged 65+. As a reminder, if you have any cold or flu symptoms, please stay home. This helps to keep our community well and programs running.

## Hire our space for your next event

Balwyn Evergreen has had a spectacular facelift, and our revamped spaces are available for hire! Whether you're looking to host a one-off event or find a new home for a regular group, our versatile rooms could be the answer to your 'where can I find a great venue?' problem.

**For more information and to arrange a tour, contact [hire@balwynevergreen.org.au](mailto:hire@balwynevergreen.org.au).**



## Connect with us



@balwyn\_evergreen



'Balwyn Evergreen Centre'



'Balwyn Evergreen Centre'