

SEPTEMBER 2026

Putting a spring in our step

Welcome to the September edition of Evergreen Connections

Happy Spring, everyone! We're excited about all the possibilities of warmer weather and more daylight hours...

We're gearing up for a busy few months with the Victoria Seniors Festival fast approaching next month. Check out page 3 for all the info on our famous High Tea and make sure you book your spot with the office. Seriously, don't risk FOMO and book your ticket today.

We're also on the lookout for volunteer drivers to join the team (page 2) and farewell Diva's volunteer Raylene (page 6). Bo's back with some cyber safety tips (page 6), and be sure to check out Cathy from our Strength + Balance Circuit (page 4).

Then there's all our free services on offer, plus our usual splash of monthly Day Trips and our updated Exercise Timetable - make sure you keep an eye on our Activities Calendar for all the updates.

That's enough for now - as always, we look forward to seeing you soon!

- The Balwyn Evergreen Centre Team

Update on Transport Service...

We're currently near capacity for our door-to-door transport service, which is due to an increase in demand for the service and gaps in our volunteer driver roster. The good news is there are other low-cost options available. Link Community Transport and the City of Boroondara Active Ageing both provide transport for CHSP clients - please contact them directly to engage their service. For more information about our transport service, please contact the office.

Events & Info Sessions

Wiser Driver Course

Monday, September 7, 14, 21, 28
1pm-3pm

Brush up on your driving knowledge over four weeks with the trusted Wiser Driver course (page 6).

Free Hearing Clinic

Tuesday, September 22
10.30am-12pm

With Weicen Yan of NeuroHearing in Canterbury (page 6).

Making the Most of your Support at Home Package coffee + chat

Thursday, October 29 (new date)
11am-12pm

A small group coffee and chat about S@H packages, with Angus Kerr from LiveWell Care (page 2).

Aged Care Navigator 1:1 session

Tuesday, November 15
9am-12pm

The last opportunity for the year to catch up with council's Aged Care Navigator (page 6).

All events and information sessions are free to attend unless stated otherwise. Please book your spot with the office and check in with the office upon arrival.



A dose of history and country air

We're getting serious Australian Gothic vibes from this photo, captured on an outing to Gulf Station in the Yarra Valley last month. Despite the wild backdrop, the group had a lovely day out enjoying the rural atmosphere and learning about the historic working farm. It's a double thumbs up for Gulf Station from our Outings Crew.

To find out more about our social programs and services, including our popular Outings Program, please contact the office.



NEWS CORNER

Updates From the Balwyn Evergreen Community

Let's talk about dementia

Did you know that Dementia is Australia's leading cause of death?

If you didn't, that's because we don't talk about it enough, which is why this Dementia Action Week (September 21-27), Dementia Australia is asking every Australian to help change that, one conversation at a time. The thing about conversations is that it's the small ones that add up – talking to your GP, colleagues, family, neighbours... all help create connection and allow support to flourish.

At Balwyn Evergreen, we're all about having a chat, and we're uniquely placed to have these specific conversations.

If you're trying to find answers for yourself or a family member, then please make a time to chat with us - we're always here to help.

To make a time to chat, or to find out about our Supported Lifestyle Program, contact the office.

To find out more about Dementia Action Week, visit: dementia.org.au.



Our Supported Lifestyle Program (SLP) is an active and engaging day program for older people with mild dementia or some cognitive decline.



Driving community connections

If you're looking for a fun, rewarding and meaningful way to volunteer, then we'd love to hear from you! We're looking for friendly, reliable volunteer drivers to join our roster, helping with local pick-ups and drop-offs, as well as our regular day trips.



As a volunteer driver, you get to: make a difference, connect with our community, enjoy plenty of laughs, and yes... fresh baking is guaranteed!

For more information or to put your hand up, contact our Volunteer Program Coordinator, Tania Kennington, on 9836 9681 or volunteer@balwynevergreen.org.au

AGED CARE UPDATE

CHSP extended until 2029

The Department of Health and Ageing announced last month that the Government will extend the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) to June 30, 2029.

Rather than rolling the program into Support at Home, the Government now thinks the CHSP should remain a standalone program and will use the extension to consult with providers and the community on the long-term future of the program.

The extension means providers, like Balwyn Evergreen, can continue to deliver services that support older people to live independently without the worry of losing funding.

Find out how to make the most of your Support at Home package - new date!

We invite you to join Angus Kerr, Principal Social Worker & Aged Care Navigator from LiveWell Care, for an informal, small-group coffee and chat with morning tea on **Thursday, October 29 from 11am-12pm at Balwyn Evergreen. Please note, this is a new date.**

This session is designed to help you clarify your status, navigate the rules, and to share with and learn from your peers. Whether you are trying to decipher 'in-scope' versus 'out-of-scope' services, or you're concerned about how changes to the program affect your quarterly budget, you are not alone. Come along to get the clarity you need to ensure you're getting the most out of your package.

This is a small group session with limited spots, so make sure you RSVP to the office ASAP.

SPOTLIGHT

Victorian Seniors Festival

Victorian
Seniors
Festival
2026

CONNECT
CREATE
CELEBRATE



You're invited to...

HIGH TEA at Balwyn Evergreen

Thursday, October 8
1.30pm-3.30pm



Join us for an afternoon of fun, friendship
and fantastic food at our annual High Tea
to celebrate the Victorian Seniors Festival!

Featuring the fabulous Dame Cara Lynn, a raffle with excellent odds and a welcome glass of bubbles upon arrival from 1pm. As you know, this event always sells out, so be sure to book early! And if you'd like to bring a friend or two, please introduce us - the more the merrier!



Cost: \$25 per person

RSVP: Friday, October 2 at 4pm

Tickets: Pre-purchase at the office

Contact: office@balwynevergreen.org.au / 9836 9681

We look forward to seeing you there!



Helping to build confidence online

For Get Online Week, we're doing our bit to help people feel safer and more confident online by holding a drop-in session on **Wednesday, October 21, from 2.30pm-4pm** for clients to get hands-on experience with devices or troubleshoot any tech problems they have.

Don't forget, if you have any tech-related questions in the meantime, please make an appointment with Bo on Mondays from 1.30pm.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Healthy Ageing with Balwyn Evergreen

Ticking the box with a provider number

Good news, Baylee Eastham, our Exercise Coordinator and Accredited Exercise Physiologist now has a provider number, which means if you're a private client, you may be able to use your private health fund to pay for your sessions. Please check with your fund first. Also, If you have a chronic health condition, your GP may be able to refer you to Balwyn Evergreen for up to five free sessions.



Sharing the birthday love

Happy birthday to our wonderful volunteer Jenelle Kerr, who celebrated her special day last month. Jenelle helps out on Tuesdays with afternoon tea and social engagement - she loves enjoying a cuppa with our exercise clients.

Thanks for volunteering with us Jenelle, your big smile and friendly chats always brighten our day.

Circuit class is the place to be

Have you tried our Strength + Balance Circuit class yet? If not, you're missing out! It's for men and women who want a solid and focused workout under the supervision of our Exercise Coordinator, Baylee Eastham AEP.

Cathy Stempel (flexing right) loves the workout and hardly ever misses a class. According to Cathy, "Circuit training is THE BEST! I used to resent and dread having to go to exercise classes.

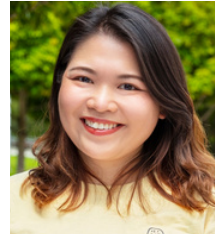
"Now, I am out of bed full of enthusiasm to attend the circuit training, knowing I'll be physically challenged while having a lot of fun. And there's a cuppa and chat after!"

Join Strength + Balance Circuit on Tuesdays at 9am and Fridays at 9.30am.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

with Ruby Cheung



Hello, friends! As we age, nutritional needs change, but our love for dessert rarely does.

For older adults, the key dietary benefit of healthy desserts is delivering high-density nutrition—like calcium and fibre which are comforting and easy to digest. When preparing these treats, keep two key nutritional tips in mind: focus on soft textures to accommodate any swallowing difficulties, and limit added sugars to support stable blood sugar levels.

Here are three simple, nutrient-dense recipes perfect for older adults:

Baked Cinnamon Apples:

- Slice apples, sprinkle with cinnamon, and bake until tender. This classic treat offers digestible, natural fiber.

Berry Yogurt Parfait:

- Layer low-sugar Greek yogurt with soft, thawed berries to provide a vital boost of protein and bone-strengthening calcium.

Chia Seed Pudding:

- Mix chia seeds into milk or plant base milk until thick. It is incredibly easy to swallow and rich in heart-healthy omega-3s.

Enjoying dessert can be both safe and deeply nourishing.

Ruby Cheung is a registered nutritionist who has a Master's in Nutrition and Population Health who has been volunteering with Balwyn Evergreen for several years. Before making any significant dietary changes or if you are worried about your health, please consult your doctor.

DAY TRIPS

A Month's Worth of Bus Outings

Get out and about with the Outings Crew!

Keep your social connections strong with Balwyn Evergreen's popular Outings Program, for people aged 65+ who are up for new experiences.

Bookings essential - please contact 9836 9681 or office@balwynevergreen.org.au.

Ask us about the extended Outings Newsletter, which gives you a sneak peek up to October 2026.

- Pick up from 9.30am (unless otherwise stated)
- Drop off from around 3.30pm
- COST: \$28 (CHSP assessed + approved), \$171 non-assessed. Lunch and tours are an additional cost
- Outings require a minimum of six people and can be changed or cancelled at short notice
- Clients who cancel after confirmation will incur the full transport cost unless extenuating circumstances apply
- Tours and entry costs are prepaid and non-refundable

Weekly Social Outings

Enjoy a day out with friends as part of our weekly Outings Crew!

Tuesday, September 1

MANOR LAKES: Sons of Manor

Just a stone's throw from Werribee, Manor Lakes is a newer development with lifestyle amenities. Lunch is at the new kid on the block - Sons of Manor. This contemporary space has plenty to choose from.

Tuesday, September 8

CLEMATIS: Paradise Valley Hotel

Nestled in the Dandenong Ranges, Clematis is known for its bushland setting, heritage charm and close-knit community. We'll take in the sights before heading to the Paradise Valley Hotel for lunch, which offers spectacular views with its delicious menu.

Tuesday, September 15

PANTON HILL: Panton Hill Pub

We're heading for the hills to Panton Hill, and its stunning surrounds, to enjoy a little mountain air and village feel. Lunch is at the Panton Hill Hotel, which boasts hearty pub food, including a seniors' menu.

Tuesday, September 22

MERENDA: Bridge Inn Hotel

The Bridge Inn Hotel has been a beloved establishment in Mernda since the 1890s. Originally conceived as a community hub, the Bridge Inn was designed to bring together locals and visitors alike. We'll enjoy a classic pub lunch, which includes a seniors' menu.

Tuesday, September 29

MORDIALLOC: The Epsom Mordialloc

Mordialloc is a go-to for fishing enthusiasts and beachgoers alike. We'll take our time driving along the coastal road and take the time to stop, stretch our legs, and take in some sea air. Lunch is at The Epsom - this social hub has plenty of options for seniors.

Fortnightly Community Outings

For people who enjoy active and engaging experiences beyond our Tuesday offerings.

Thursday, September 3

RIPPON LEA ESTATE TOUR - ELSTERNWICK
9AM START

Step back in time on a guided tour of this magnificent mansion, located on a sprawling estate in Melbourne's south-east.

Discover the captivating stories about the mansion's history and the remarkable individuals who shaped it.

ENTRY: \$12 concession

TOUR: \$8 concession

Thursday, September 17

LADY LAVENDER'S TEA ROOM - BUNYIP
9AM START

Today's destination is Lady Lavender's - a gorgeous country tea room set among cottage gardens with an eclectic gift shop and nursery.

Serving Devonshire Tea, light lunches and desserts with a flair of bucolic charm.

Monthly Premium Outing

Treat yourself to something extra special with our monthly Premium Outing option!

Monday, September 21

MT DANDENONG BOTANIC GARDENS
9AM START

Today's visit is to Victoria's premier cool-climate botanic garden. Set across 50ha with breathtaking views over the Yarra Valley, this expansive retreat features stunning botanical collections. Please note that some terrain is hilly.

TOUR: \$9

ACTIVE LIVING

Keeping Social Connections Strong



Farewell Raylene, with love the Divas XO

One of our long-standing volunteers, Raylene Golder, bid farewell to her beloved Divas last month after more than eight years in the role. Raylene was with the group when it began and has many happy memories from her time here.

"I just love the ladies; they're all so wonderful," she says, adding that it's been a privilege to watch the friendships form over the years. Raylene is sad to go but promises she'll pop in to say hello from time to time. Thanks, Raylene, and all the best for whatever comes next.

CYBER SNIPPETS *with Bo Cui*

Recent cyber incidents involving Australian companies, like Optus and Origin Energy, remind us that personal information can sometimes be exposed, even when we have done nothing wrong.

If a company you use experiences a data breach, it does not automatically mean that someone has accessed your bank account or stolen your money.

However, information such as your name, email address, phone number or other personal details may be used later by scammers. This can make scam calls, emails and text messages sound much more convincing. A caller may know your name, where you live, or which company you use. They may use this information to gain your trust and then ask for more sensitive details.

If you hear about a data breach involving an organisation you deal with, be extra cautious for the following weeks and months.

Do not rush to respond to unexpected messages or calls and never provide passwords, PIN numbers or security codes.

If something does not feel right, contact the organisation yourself using a phone number or website you already trust.

Remember: knowing something about you does not prove someone is genuine. Stop. Check. Then act.

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 1:1 sessions on whatever tech problems are irking you.

To book with Bo, please contact the office.



Become a Wiser Driver

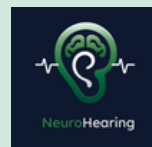
Sign up for the FREE four-week Wiser Driver refresher course beginning September 7. The course is for older drivers, building on existing knowledge and experience to keep you driving safely. There are no practical tests, just good, solid education delivered in a welcoming and collaborative setting. Participants will also receive handbooks and access to online resources, plus tea and coffee are included. **Wiser Driver is on Monday, September 7, 14, 21 and 28 from 1pm to 3pm. Spaces are limited! For more information and to book, please contact the office.**

Aged Care Navigation times

Book a time to meet 1:1 with Council's Aged Care Navigator at Balwyn Evergreen on: **Tuesday, November 17, from 9am-12pm** You can book your 20-minute appointment with the office. For more information about this service, visit: boroondara.vic.gov.au/aged-care-navigation

Get a FREE hearing check

Don't miss the opportunity to book a FREE specialist hearing assessment with experienced audiologist Weicen Yan of NeuroHearing in Canterbury.



The clinic covers: hearing loss screening, earwax checks, plus hearing aid cleaning and troubleshooting.

The next clinic is on Tuesday, September 22, from 10.30am-12pm. To book your 15-minute appointment, contact the office.

Falls Prevention Round 2

The next round of our 10-week Falls Prevention course for October is fully booked. The following round will be in 2027. If you'd like to join the waitlist, please put your name down at the office, and Baylee will be in touch for a chat.

EXERCISE & SOCIALISE

Your Ticket to Staying Fit & Well

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

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

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10.30am Exercise to Music with Jo G	9am Strength + Balance Circuit with Baylee	9.30am Falls Prevention Program with Baylee **Begins October**	9.30am Men's Exercise with Tom	9.30am Strength + Balance Circuit with Jo G
12pm Seated Strength Exercise with Janet	9.30am Challenge Your Balance with Denise	10.15am Strength Exercise with Tom	9.30am Exercise to Music with Jo M **45 minute class**	10am Tai Chi for Balance with Lilei
	11.30am Seated Exercise to Music with Jo M	11am Seated Strength Exercise with Baylee	1pm-3.30pm Table Tennis self run	11am Seated Strength Exercise with Yanmei
Please note, the Falls Prevention Program is a set 10-week course. You must be registered for the full course to participate. For upcoming dates and information please talk to Baylee.	1.45pm Strength Exercise with Tom	11.45am Line Dancing with Jo C	2.15pm Meditation & Yoga with Elizabeth **75 minute class**	11.15am Seated Tai Chi with Lilei

Legend:

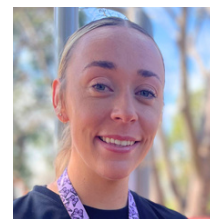
Gentle	Moderate
Active	Social

Cost of Group Classes

\$12 CHSP assessed and approved
\$25 non assessed / private
\$5 Table Tennis

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

For more information, please contact our Exercise Coordinator and Accredited Exercise Physiologist, Baylee Eastham.



Baylee Eastham



Denise Mokasdi

Balwyn Evergreen Gym

Small group sessions (45 mins)
Tuesdays 10.15am

Thursdays 11am & 1.15pm

Max 4 people per session

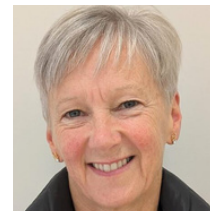
Limited 1:1 EP sessions with Baylee
Bookings essential!

Find the right class for you!

Before you get started with your exercise plan, book a time to meet with Exercise Coordinator Baylee to make sure you're medically cleared to participate. This ensures you get the most out of your program.



Yanmei Chen



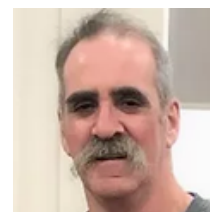
Jo Morris



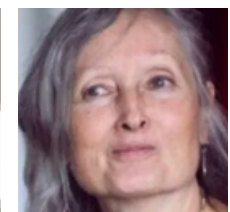
Jo Golds



Lilei Enright



Tom Scott



Elizabeth Mackenzie

Notes

- The Tuesday 1.45pm Seated Strength class has been cancelled
- Please check the online Activities Calendar for any timetable changes
- Make sure you wear appropriate footwear. Sandals are not permitted

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Marking 50 years of giving back to the community

Balwyn Evergreen CEO Tina Hogarth-Clarke pictured with Ken McQualter (right) from Balwyn Rotary and past Balwyn Evergreen CEO, and Graeme Hope (Rotary District Governor 9800) at the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Balwyn Rotary's Camberwell Sunday Market last month. The market has raised a whopping \$20m for charitable causes during that time and continues to be one of Melbourne's must-see, second-hand markets.



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 a cancellation fee.

Update your details

Make sure you let the office know if there are any changes to your personal details.

Join our mailing list

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

Chatty Cafe open for conversation

We had a fun and colourful launch of our Chatty Cafe last month, which coincided with Loneliness Awareness Week.



Pictured above right are Mary, who's one of our Chatty volunteers, and Patricia, who came along to enjoy the launch.

Balwyn Evergreen's Chatty Cafe runs weekly on Wednesdays from 10.30am to 11.30am in the Evergreen Connections Cafe & Information Hub. Everyone is welcome, and our Chatty volunteers will make sure the conversation flows and all attendees feel comfortable.

The cafe is also open to the community on a drop-in basis on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. We'd love to see more people using the cafe during these times!

For more information about the Chatty Cafe and our social support programs, 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

Get your flu shot

Flu vaccines are now available and 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 staff and clients well.



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.

Connect with us



@balwyn_evergreen



'Balwyn Evergreen Centre'



'Balwyn Evergreen Centre'