

NOVEMBER 2025

A new age of choice and independence

Welcome to the November edition of Evergreen Connections

There's never a dull moment at Balwyn Evergreen! October was particularly colourful with the Victorian Seniors Festival in full swing. We celebrated in style with our famous High Tea (page 2), which was a fantastic way to spend an afternoon. November is set to be equally as busy with our Physiotherapy service resuming on-site from November 10 and a new Seated Tai Chi class trialling on Friday, November 21 (page 4). We hear from Evergreen Connections Volunteer Joel on page 3 and introduce new team member Lisa on page 6. There's a whole lot more, plus we're thinking about Christmas and the end of the year!

And then there's the Annual Consumer Survey, November 10-24

The Annual Consumer Survey will run from November 10-24, and we need as many responses as possible! It's a great opportunity to share your thoughts and feedback, which ultimately helps us deliver a better overall service to our community. The survey will be sent via email, so if you're not on our mailing list, please let the office know. You can also complete a hard copy and return it to the office. Thanks again for your support!

As always, we look forward to seeing you soon!

- The Balwyn Evergreen Centre Team

2025 Annual General Meeting, November 26

Notice is given that the Annual General Meeting of the members of Balwyn Evergreen Centre (ACN 004 672 306) (BEC) will be held at Balwyn Evergreen, 45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn and via Zoom, on Wednesday, November 26, 2025, at 4.30pm. Please let us know if you'd like to attend, and papers will be sent to you.



The 1000 faces of Balwyn Evergreen

Richard presents Balwyn Evergreen CEO Tina Hogarth-Clarke with his original painting, 1000 Faces, which will go on display at the centre just as soon as we get that pesky tracking installed. Richard is part of a group from Prague House, which visits our Evergreen Connections Café & Information Hub fortnightly to enjoy a coffee, catch up and change of scenery.

For more information about how to spend time in our cafe, please contact the office.

Events & Info Sessions

Play Reading in the Café
Thursday, November 13 & 27
2.30pm-4pm

Jo Campbell, our line dancing instructor, is hosting fortnightly play reading sessions. Register your interest at the office.

Free Hearing Clinic
Wednesday, November 20
10.30pm-12pm

Book a 15 minute appointment with audiologist Weicen Yan of Neurohearing. More info page 4

Chatty Café
Thursday, November 27
1pm-2pm

Drop in for a chat and a coffee in the café at our monthly Chatty Café session. Everyone is welcome.



Group Christmas Parties
Throughout December

It's time to lock in the end-of-year Christmas dos for each exercise and social support group. Talk to your instructor/program coordinator or amongst yourselves and let us know what you've got planned.



NEWS CORNER

Updates From the Balwyn Evergreen Centre Community

No better way to celebrate our community

Last month's High Tea to celebrate the Victorian Seniors Festival was a day to remember. Thank you to everyone for coming along to enjoy the event - it really highlighted what a fantastic community we have.

Special mention to Cr Shima Ibuki and members of the Active Ageing team for sharing the afternoon with us.

To the spectacular Dame Cara Lynn for entertaining us so beautifully - her ability to get people up and dancing is simply magical.

Congratulations to our raffle winners and to our supporters - Ruth Shipp, Tan Sun of Tan's Greenhouse and Fruit Nest.

To our volunteer bakers: Annie, Giti, Rosie and Judy who made the cupcakes, sausage rolls, scones and lemon slice. And to our centre cook, Rodney, who helped pull the menu together.

A big shout out to Lotana Mutuku, who helped organise the event and for donating the petit fours.

And to all our amazing volunteers and staff who brought the event to life - what an effort, we salute you!



Volunteers, don't miss this learning opportunity

Introduction to Understanding Dementia

**Thursday 13 November
from 1.30pm-3pm**

Led by Raymond Kolesnikoff, our Activities Coordinator and Dementia Lead, who has more than 10 years of experience in this space. We're offering this workshop to our volunteers to help support them in their roles.

Topics include:

- Causes and symptoms of dementia
- The concept of changed behaviour and potential underlying causes
- Practical approaches appropriate for common behaviours

RSVP to Volunteer Program Lead Kerri at volunteer@balwynevergreen.org.au or 9836 9681 by Thursday, November 6.

Christmas party time for our volunteers

To all our valued volunteers, please join us as we celebrate you and your amazing contributions throughout the year.

**On Wednesday, December 3, at 12pm
at Balwyn Evergreen**

RSVP Wednesday, November 26, to Kerri at kerri.jackson@balwynevergreen.org.au or 9836 9681

We're looking forward to celebrating with you.

EVERGREEN CONNECTIONS CAFE & INFORMATION HUB CASUAL DROP-IN TIMES

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm-4pm

The cafe is open during these times for clients and the community to enjoy the space and run their own groups from. The coffee machine is free to use for Balwyn Evergreen clients as part of their usual activities. Outside of activity times and for the general public, please help keep us caffeinated with a gold coin donation.

Creating Evergreen Connections

Joel Cooper enjoys making friends, but it's his special bond with Paul that really fills his cup. They're part of our Evergreen Connections Visitor Program that's easing loneliness one friendship at a time.

Friendship at the heart of volunteering

When 24-year-old Joel Cooper signed up for the Evergreen Connections Visitor Program, which is part of the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS), he thought he was simply giving his time. Instead, Joel found a new friend in Paul and a weekly ritual that has become one of the highlights of his week.

Joel, a sustainability project manager with the government, moved to Melbourne for university in 2021. Volunteering has always been a part of his life, from coaching basketball and supporting children with disabilities in school to travelling with community groups. However, joining Evergreen Connections has been a different experience altogether.

"What struck me about Evergreen Connections is how open-ended it is. Every match looks different, and the activities can be as simple as going for a walk. It felt like a program where I could be myself and also learn from the person I'm paired with," Joel says.

A mate to walk with

For Joel, his match with Paul has been nothing short of rewarding. Paul, who lives at Prague House and is a double amputee, has faced immense challenges with mobility but radiates positivity. Despite difficulties, Paul describes himself as grateful for the companionship.

"I wanted someone to go out with, to share a coffee and have a proper conversation," Paul says.

"With Joel, we go on outings, find books for others and talk about all sorts of things. I don't have family around and I don't see friends often, so his visits mean a lot." Each week, Joel and Paul head out on long walks that often stretch into hours.

A favourite stop is the local book mailbox libraries, where Paul thoughtfully picks out titles for other residents and carers at Prague House. "Paul remembers every detail you tell him, and he is endlessly thoughtful," Joel says.



Conversations over coffee

What binds the two together most is conversation. Food and restaurants are their favourite topic, with Joel calling both of them "big foodies". However, chats can wander anywhere, from local history to the memory of a dog Paul once met on a street corner, whose name he still remembers a month later.

"Nothing feels forced. We can just be ourselves and talk about anything," Joel says.

"From the start, it hasn't felt like volunteering at all, just catching up with a mate."

For Paul, the friendship brings more than just good company. "It makes me feel better about myself," he says. "Friendships like this are important. They give you something to look forward to and make life feel brighter."

Volunteering made simple

Joel believes that anyone can be a part of the Evergreen Connections program.

"You don't need to be a certain type of person. The program is great at pairing people up, so all you really need is an open mind and an interest in meeting new people," he said.

For more information about the program, please contact the office.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Healthy Ageing with Balwyn Evergreen Centre

The balancing benefits of Tai Chi

In case you missed it, we offer a weekly Tai Chi class.

This established practice is particularly beneficial for older people as it can improve balance, reduce the risk of falls, and enhance flexibility and strength. Its gentle nature makes it a low-impact exercise that can be adapted for most fitness levels, making it a highly accessible and safe option for older people.

Our Tai Chi class runs on Fridays at 10am. This is a moderate intensity class led by Tai Chi specialist Lilei Enright.

We're adding a new class...

SEATED TAI CHI

Join us for a **FREE** trial on
Friday, November 21 at 11.15am
With **Lilei Enright**

For more information and to book contact the office or speak with our Exercise Coordinator, David.

Physiotherapy back at Balwyn Evergreen

We've teamed up with Elevate Physio and Pilates to run weekly physio consultations on site in the Balwyn Evergreen clinic, beginning Monday, November 10 from 10am-1pm.

Led by experienced physiotherapist Erin Van Graan, the service will treat anything from arthritis, tendonitis, sciatica, to post-surgical recovery. Erin is passionate about providing the best possible service, which is personal, holistic, and effective.

This service may be able to be claimed on private health insurance, Medicare or your Support at Home package. Please check with your fund/package before signing up.

Balwyn Evergreen door-to-door transport service available upon request - additional cost applies.

For more information and to book, contact the office.



Free hearing clinic at Balwyn Evergreen

Book a FREE Specialist Hearing Assessment with experienced audiologist Weicen Yan of Neurohearing.

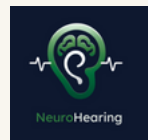
On Thursday, November 20, from 10.30am-12pm

The Hearing Clinic covers:

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

NeuroHearing is at 215 Canterbury Rd, Canterbury. For more information, visit their website: neurohearing.com.au.

Book a 15-minute appointment at the office (9826 9681) or office@balwynevergreen.org.au. Please arrive five minutes before your appointment and check in at the office.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

with Ruby Cheung

Happy November everyone!

This month we're talking about eyes and ways we can support eye health with a balanced diet and select nutrients.



As we age, it's important to pay attention to our eyes and eyesight.

Research shows that certain nutrients, especially when enjoyed as part of a balanced diet, can help protect against common age-related eye conditions such as macular degeneration and cataracts.

The Age-Related Eye Disease Studies (AREDS) found that a combination of vitamins C and E, Zinc, and Copper could reduce the risk of advanced macular degeneration by about 25 per cent.

Later research also highlighted the benefits of lutein and zeaxanthin, which are antioxidants that shield the eyes from harmful blue light.

The research suggested these antioxidants offered similar protection with improved safety.

Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish, walnuts, and flaxseeds, are also linked to healthier eyes, while vitamins A and C may help lower the risk of glaucoma and cataracts.

Enjoying leafy greens rich in nitrates may bring additional benefits for the eyes, but as a general rule, we could all be eating more leafy greens.

Instead of focusing on a single supplement, which can be difficult, aim to have a colourful, balanced diet full of vegetables, fruits, nuts, and fish to help keep your eyes clear and bright for years to come.

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.

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

November Outings

Tuesday, November 4



Tuesday, November 11

MORNINGTON: Kirks on the Esplanade

There's nothing like a trip to the seaside, and Mornington is always a crowd favourite. We'll enjoy the drive south, stopping along the way for morning tea. Lunch is at Kirks on the Esplanade, which has a sweeping view of the bay. The comprehensive menu offers something for everyone and a discount for seniors.

Tuesday, November 18

WILLIAMSTOWN: Fifi's by the Beach

For a touch of Melbourne's maritime history, a visit to its first port settlement, Williamstown, is a must. While still a vibrant port town, it's also a destination for foodies and beachgoers alike. We'll enjoy lunch at Fifi's by the Beach, which has a classic menu featuring fish and chips. With the ever-changing CBD as a backdrop, this outing is definitely one to add to your diary.

Tuesday, November 25

YARRA GLEN: Alowyn Gardens

EARLY START 9am

Alowyn Gardens is an award-winning landscaped garden spanning seven acres and nine distinct styles. Wander the gardens and take in the botanical artistry that's been carefully crafted over 25 years. Lunch will be on site at the Wisteria Cafe, which offers light meals and excellent coffee!

Garden entry fee: \$12.50

For a copy of the extended Outings Newsletter, which gives you a sneak peek up to February 2026, please contact office@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 are an additional cost
- 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



The outings crew took a trip down memory lane recently with a detour past the house that Ruth was born in. According to Ruth, the paint and gardens may have changed but the essence of the home is still the same.

ACTIVE LIVING

Keeping Social Connections Strong

Welcome to the team, Lisa!

We're excited to welcome Lisa Colovic to the Balwyn Evergreen team as the new Lifestyle Assistant.

She's pictured here on her inaugural outing, enjoying the sunshine and getting to know the clients. Lisa will also support Raymond in the Supported Lifestyle Program on Wednesdays and Fridays. Lisa has worked in a similar space previously and has a wealth of experience and expertise to bring to the role. Make sure you give her a good, old-fashioned Balwyn Evergreen welcome when you see her!



Our Supported Lifestyle Program has been expanded

Our highly successful Friday supported Lifestyle Program is now offered on Wednesday! Lisa joins Raymond in delivering our Supported Lifestyle program for people with mild dementia or cognitive decline. This interactive program offers a crucial social outlet for clients and offers varied activities, including a seated exercise class, entertainment and a nutritious lunch. "It's a trusted day respite program promoting dignity, connection and vitality - supporting both carers and those they care for," Raymond says. Please note: for now, we no longer offer a community lunch at Balwyn Evergreen. The Wednesday Club Lunch has been cancelled to make room for the expanded Supported Lifestyle Program.



Claim the extra Power Saving Bonus

The Victorian Government has announced a new \$100 Power Saving Bonus program for eligible concession card households to help ease cost-of-living pressures. To be eligible, households will need to have a recent residential electricity bill and a valid concession card. Applications can be submitted via compare.energy.vic.gov.au, by calling 1800 000 832, or by dropping in to Balwyn Evergreen for help.



Ladies who lunch and learn

The Divas were treated to two fun and informative presentations supported by health consumables supplier, Surgical House.

Complete with goodie bags, the group learned all about skin care, nutrition and wellbeing. It was definite food for thought!

Thank you to Jade Ryan and team for providing such an insightful presentation.

If you're a lady who'd like to lunch with the Divas, which meets fortnightly on a Thursday, contact Raymond to find out what's coming up.

Also, if you have any suggestions for guest speakers or interesting presentations, please let us know!

AGED CARE UPDATE

The new Aged Care Act and the Support at Home program have now commenced, placing older people at the centre of the aged care system. The new, rights-based Act delivers on 58 recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Older people now have more say in their care and more control over their lives.

These changes reflect years of consultation with providers, workers, advocates, families, carers and most importantly, older people.

The reforms will build a fairer and safer aged care system for everyone.

Any questions or concerns, please talk to us. We're on this journey with you!

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
10.30am Exercise to Music with Jo G	9.30am Challenge Your Balance with Denise	10.15am Seated Strength Exercise with David	9.30am Men's Exercise with Tom	10am Tai Chi with Lilei
12pm Seated Strength Exercise with David	11.30am Seated Exercise to Music with Jo M	10.15am Strength Exercise with Tom	9.30am Movement to Music with Jo M **45 minute class**	11am Seated Strength Exercise with Yanmei
	1.45pm Seated Strength Exercise with David	11.30am Line Dancing with Jo C	1pm-3.30pm Table Tennis self run	11.15am Seated Tai Chi with Lilei **FREE TRIAL 21/11**
	1.45pm Strength Exercise with Tom		2.30pm 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, David.



David Watson



Denise Mokasdi

Evergreen Gym Studio + Personal Training

Small Group Circuit Sessions

Thursdays 11am & 1.15pm (45 mins)

Personal Training

Contact David to arrange day/time

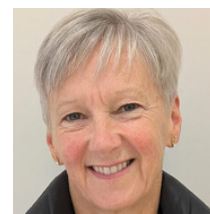
Refer a friend and be rewarded!

We're sharing the love...

refer a friend to our exercise program and both you and your friend will enjoy a free class on us!



Yanmei Chen



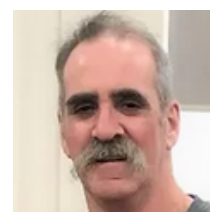
Jo Morris



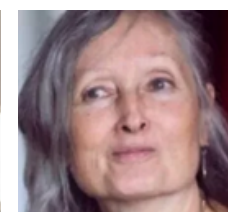
Jo Golds



Lilei Enright



Tom Scott



Elizabeth Mackenzie

Notes

- Please check the online Activities Calendar for any timetable changes
- Make sure you wear appropriate sneakers. Sandals are not permitted

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Student feedback loop

Lyndon Smith is pictured here providing feedback to students from Swinburne University who are working on various projects to improve the experiences of older people in accessing services. We had five different projects presented to a group of clients, who were happy to provide constructive feedback. This collaboration is a great opportunity for both students and our organisation to look at ways we can improve.



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

Pop-up advertisements and email attachments are common vehicles for malware. This month we're focusing on how to spot and avoid these common traps that are designed to trick you into calling a fake support number, revealing personal information, or downloading malware.



Avoid pop-up scams

- Pop-ups claiming you've won a prize or your computer has a virus are often scams
- Close them immediately without clicking any buttons or links

Be cautious with attachments

- If you don't know who the sender is, then don't open the attachment
- Even if it's someone you do know, be wary of unexpected or strange file types

If you need help, give us a call!

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 regular 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

AC number collection

Don't forget to provide your Aged Care (AC) Number to the office. This is your unique identifying number assigned by My Aged Care and on all correspondence. With changes to aged care, we are required to collect and store your AC Number on file.

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



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