



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL CLUB INC. CANBERRA

MINUTES OF THE 59th ANNUAL MEETING HELD AT
THE HELLENIC CLUB, WODEN, ACT, ON WEDNESDAY 25 OCTOBER 2023

1. The meeting started at 11.03am.

2. APOLOGIES

President, Maya Kayali, confirmed that we have a quorum (minimum of 82 Voting Members) and the AGM could proceed.

Maya advised that late apologies could be added to the list located at the back of the meeting room.

Attendance as Recorded in the Trybooking system:

	Associates	Australian	International	Total
Apology with Proxy	0	5	3	8
Apology, no Proxy	5	46	17	68
Attendee	2	105	44	151
TOTAL	7	156	64	227

Maya invited each of the present Committee Members to join her on the stage. Argi Deak and Catherine Bandle had made their apologies for the meeting.

3. MINUTES of the 58th Annual General Meeting 26 October 2022

Maya Kayali, President, stated that the Minutes of the 58th AGM held on 26 October 2022 had been emailed to all Members with the recent Bulletin. It is also available on the website and paper copies have been placed on the side table with all the other AGM documents.

The Minutes were taken as read.

Maya Kayali asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

Approval of the Minutes:

Proposed: Yetty Daly

Seconded: Soucila Tompsett

Carried by show of hands.

4, PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President, Maya Kayali, informed the meeting that her report will be available on the WIC website and read it as follows:

It is my pleasure to present my annual report, at the Club's 59th AGM, as President of the Women's International Club of Canberra.

In addition to presenting it, paper copies of the report have been placed on the registration side tables, and it will be posted on the WIC website as well.

Contrary to last year where significant concerns about covid transmission prevailed, this WIC year marked a return to a near normal WIC life.

However, the easing of restrictions on travel meant that many WIC members embarked on long-awaited extended holidays, which resulted in a somewhat lower attendance levels during the winter months.

Generally, this year was enjoyable marked by a strong budget and a large saving in the bank, 47 new members joined WIC mostly internationals, 56 circles, a range of excellent speakers on various topics, cultural programs that involved 7 countries, generous hospitality at Contact Mornings we afforded every month, and also the September annual lunch which was a wonderful event held at one of the best venues in Canberra.

I will now report on the different aspects of WIC.

Membership:

In February 2023, when this year started, we had 286 members, considerably lower than in previous years. Enrolment of Visiting Internationals (IV) was also lower than in previous years.

We speculated then, probably correctly, that this was due to the impact of the pandemic, lockdowns and related border closures which have undoubtedly led to the slower renewal of staff of diplomatic missions and a decreased intake within some missions.

As a result, **WIC membership in February 2023 was below the balance ratios of (Australian: International : VI) that existed in previous years.**

Enrolment of **visiting internationals** was therefore a priority this year as it is a requirement of the WIC Constitution that the international character of the Club is to be maintained and that we should endeavour to maintain a balance in membership between Australians and Visiting Internationals.

Thanks to you WIC members, this past WIC year we have welcomed 47 new members, mostly internationals (32 Internationals & 15 Australians). New Internationals were hailing from 28 different countries.

The total number of WIC members at the end of September, that is at the end of this WIC year was 314 (there was a number of end of year resignations). The ratio of Internationals: Australians is now 1:2, and internationals are comprising a 35% of total number, which is well within or somewhat higher than in previous years.

We farewelled 15 members, representing 14 VI and 1 Australian, who have resigned or returned to their home countries

WIC's intake of visiting internationals has been helped a great deal by our Visiting International members, and in particular, by Vice President Naseem Vohra. I would like to sincerely thank Naseem, as well as Marsia Pramono and other VI members for promoting WIC so effectively among the diplomatic community in Canberra.

I would like to thank Di Osborne, our Membership Liaison Officer for her excellent work together with her team: New Members Hostess Eman Alrubae, Guest Hostess Minal Shah, and Jeannie Chong, who kept the Membership Nomination process on track.

I would also like to thank the dedicated team of WIC volunteers who have always been ready to assist the MLO in the check-in process for each Contact Morning. I also want to wish Cindy Stockbridge, our dedicated volunteer, health and speedy recovery after her recent surgeries.

Registration of Attendance at WIC Contact Mornings

In May this year we trialled for the first time a new online booking system for members to register their attendance at Contact Mornings in advance. This idea has been under consideration since being contemplated by a few of us on the Committee last year. We brought it into the WIC process at the right time, when it became evident that greater clarity was needed on the expected number of attendees for events and contact mornings.

I would like to thank Robyn Tulloh for taking responsibility for researching and selecting an appropriate online system (Trybooking). I would like to thank her for introducing the Trybooking system and for developing it to our needs, which include:

- Registering attendance and apologies for each month's Contact.
- Ticket sales for the annual lunch, also involving the recording of dietary and seating requirements.
- The recording of apologies and proxies for the AGM. The use of Trybooking has made it easy to extract the details required for the quorum and for the AGM (as compared to last year when we had to find out these details manually).

I am so excited about future possibilities for updating and streamlining WIC procedures to reduce the time and effort involved in organising and managing WIC events.

Finances:

The audited financial report has been emailed to you having been returned from the auditor a few days ago. I have left paper copies of this report and the Treasurer's report, on the side registration table. These reports will also be posted on the website.

The Club remains in a strong financial position with funds in the bank at the end of September of \$106,054.

The Committee has also taken cost-saving measures and kept a careful watch on spending, including gifts for guest speakers and presenters. We had the pleasure of hosting our Associate members for a morning tea at an Associate member's house (Marilyn Allen). The function was catered for by the Committee. No reimbursements were sought.

The Annual Lunch was a special one this year as it was held at the Commonwealth Club in Yarralumla (rather than at the Hellenic Club) and the turnout was high. A comfortable WIC budget made it possible for WIC to subsidise the cost of the lunch. All prizes and gifts given to members at the Annual Lunch were donated by the Committee, as were the floral centre pieces (other than the roses).

The level of funds currently held in WIC accounts is necessary to meet the cost of our Contact Mornings if/when a change of venue from the Hellenic Club is necessary. As you by now know that there is uncertainty going forward given the expected redevelopment construction work in the Hellenic Club. It is highly likely that we will be moving to a new venue next year. It is therefore particularly important that WIC finances remain in a strong position.

On behalf of our Treasurer Robyn Tulloh, I thank all those who renewed and paid for their membership promptly. However, a large number of members have not yet made a payment.

Circles:

We had 56 circles operating this year, 12 of which were new and with many circles running to full capacity. The range of circles was quite varied as in previous years and included indoors and outdoors activities. Indoor circles included cultural circles, languages, book reading, poetry, bridge and mahjong, etc. Then a range of dining out circles, cafes and cooking. Arts, patchwork, quilting, portable craft, music and singing, and photography. And of course, sports, tennis, walking circles, Arboretum, and welcome to Canberra region circles.

I would like to thank all circle leaders for their dedication and for the time and effort they put into the running of their circles.

I am pleased to inform you that the Committee hosted two welcome afternoon tea functions at the Vice President's residence to thank circle leaders on behalf of WIC.

Programs

This year, we delivered a range of programs, with particular emphasis on cultural programs as was done last year. WIC members from India as well as from six Arab countries (Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Saudi Arabia) made presentations about their countries, including their heritage, history, traditions, culture, fashion, arts, music and dance.

There was also a range of speakers on different topics of interest. We had two authors (Moira McAlister and Nida Degutiene) who spoke about their recent publications, and two artists: Jenny Bowker; an Internationally known quilter and textile artist, and Joanna Gilmour; Senior Curator at the National Portrait Gallery who gave presentations about their subjects of the arts. And of course, Professor Michael Ryan (ANU) started the WIC year with a talk about gender inequality.

It was another enjoyable WIC year and I am proud to have been part of a committee that has presented a successful and enriching program for 2023.

Committee

My sincere thanks go to this year's WIC Committee who worked hard to ensure that WIC continues to be the vibrant and friendly place it has always been. I have been fortunate to have worked alongside a group of skilled women – both committee members and ex officios - who have worked well together to support the operation of the Club and to strengthen cultural understanding among the Club's members.

Thanks also to the 3 photographers who helped at the annual lunch in Lucinda's absence: Julia Roberts, Jeannie Chong & Sherry Lee. I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to **Vice President Naseem Vohra**, who has been a wonderful colleague. Naseem promoted WIC as a friendship and multicultural club among visiting internationals and has enriched WIC with her energy and insight. Naseem is returning to India at the end of this year and I would like to wish her all the best with her return to her home country.

Possible change of venue for WIC's Contact Mornings for 2024:

As I noted at the August Contact Morning, the Hellenic Club is planning a substantial re-development, with the first stage of development involving a reconstruction of the carpark commencing in the early months of next year.

Over the past couple of months, Robyn Tulloh and myself have had meetings with the Hellenic Club who confirmed that the car park reconstruction work may commence as early as February or March 2024. However, the Hellenic Club was not able to confirm a firm date for the start of the reconstruction.

Considering that few alternatives were available, we proceeded with meetings and discussions with the Canberra [Southern Cross Club \(CSCC\) in Woden](#) which seemed an obvious alternative venue.

The matter was discussed at length with the Committee, who voted to proceed with the selection of [CSCC Woden](#) as the new venue for WIC contact mornings.

The [CSCC](#) will be an excellent new venue for us given the availability of **2 newly renovated large rooms complete with good seating capacity, a stage and modern AV system, a multi-storey undercover carparking which will be available for us free of charge, excellent catering, and competitive rates. The Bistro and cafes downstairs present an added bonus.**

A decision as to the exact month WIC contacts will move to the [CSCC](#) will be made by the incoming committee.

Further details about the new venue will be finalised and **announced by the new committee at the November Contact Morning** and will be included in the December and February Bulletins. Please make sure to read the bulletin for these announcements.

I trust that you will be very pleased with our new venue.

Final thoughts:

I consider that one of the most significant achievements during my time as your president has been an unwavering commitment to multicultural understanding.

Our organisation's core values have always revolved around diversity and inclusion, and I have made sure to keep these principles at the centre of everything I have done while president. Through our various programs, events, and initiatives, we have fostered deep appreciation for different cultures and traditions.

The friendship initiative that I introduced, where small groups of Australians and VI were invited for get togethers, succeeded in getting members to get to know each other, to chat and have good time together. It was heartwarming to see friendships being formed between members who may otherwise have not had the chance to properly meet.

This commitment to multicultural understanding has been instrumental, I think, in shaping my 2 year term - especially given my own cultural background. That, together with my identity as an Australian, gave me a strong sense of a hybrid role which I felt quite passionate about.

I am also particularly proud of the annual lunch events we held. At last year's annual lunch, Carl Rafferty, accompanied by his talented soloists, sopranos and tenors, generously presented a wonderful special preview performance from Opera by Candlelight. Last month's annual lunch, held at one of the best venues in Canberra and featuring the talents of our own members, was also a wonderful event and a splendid celebration of our Club.

In addition, I want to acknowledge the friendships that I have formed with so many of you. I am forever grateful for the meaningful connections we have made.

When I started last year, I was still in the midst of some difficult personal circumstances. The role of president was not just an opportunity and responsibility, it was a lifeline, a source of strength, and a testament to the power of human spirit as well as a chance to connect with others. It reminded me of the incredible resilience and capacity for growth that we all have inside us.

My sincere thanks and appreciation go to all of you for your support and encouragement. I have greatly valued your comments of appreciation, input and feedback, whether in emails, messages or in person.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as president of this wonderful organisation. I enjoyed every minute of the past 2 years and every chat I had with so many of you. I am proud to say that I have become familiar with nearly all members and I have been fortunate to have made lovely friendships that I hope will last.

I wish the new president and new committee all the best in their new roles.
Thank you once again.

Goodbye

Maya Kayali
WIC President 2021-2023

Maya Kayali invited questions. There were no questions.

Approval of the President's Report:

Proposed: Anna Prosser **Seconded:** Penny Gardner **Carried** by show of hands.

5. SECRETARY and PUBLIC OFFICER REPORTS

The President, Maya Kayali, noted that the Secretary and Public Officer Reports had been distributed and are taken as read:

WIC is an “Incorporated Association” and its activities are governed by the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (ACT). The Constitution of the Club is based on the Model Rules set out in section 31 (b) of the Act and in the Schedule 1 to the Associations Incorporation Regulations 1991.

The Secretary of the Club and the Public Officer are described in sections 57 and 59 of the Act, and the duties are set out in the legislation.

As Secretary, I certify that these duties have been carried out, the main ones being: Maintaining minutes of the election and appointment of all office bearers and other Committee members; and maintaining the names of all those present at Committee meetings and the Annual General Meeting. Copies of all these records are available for inspection by any member interested in seeing them.

As Public Officer, I have carried out my duties fulfilling the requirements of the ACT Associations Act of 1991. I have notified the Register of Incorporated Associations of all changes in the membership of the WIC Committee, and lodged our Annual Reports, as required with the ACT Government.

**Catherine Doherty – WIC Secretary and Public Officer
26/10/2022 to 25/10/2023**

Approval of the Secretary and Public Officer Reports:

Proposed: Lindy Ross **Seconded:** Eman Al-Rubae **Carried** by show of hands.

6. TREASURER’S REPORT

The President, Maya Kayali, noted that a draft Treasurer’s Report and a draft financial statement had been distributed with the Bulletin and that hard copies of the 2022/2023 audited financial statement were available from the registration table. The official final version will be posted on the website.

The final Treasurer’s Report is as follows:

A draft Financial statement for the year ending 30th September 2023 has been distributed to members. The official final version is tabled here. The final version includes the letterhead of the Auditor company on page 9, and the signature of the Independent auditor on page 10. All other information is the same as the draft.

The statements show the surplus for the year was \$6,526, a little more than 2022. The Membership fees for 2023 were increased from previous years in anticipation of significant costs increases, that had been suggested to us, particularly from the Hellenic Club. Fortunately, costs did not increase as expected and most expenses remain similar to the previous year.

Due to the fee increase, Membership revenue is higher than last year. Although, at the end of September almost 1/3rd of members had not renewed their membership. As of today, there remains about 50 outstanding membership renewals.

\$30,000 was moved from the current account to an interest bearing 12 month term deposit. The Club now has \$70,493.76 in 2 term deposit accounts, one 3 month short term and longer 12 month term. Interest earned increased significantly due to the increase in interest rates by the Reserve Bank.

The Annual Lunch in September was a great success. The Commonwealth Club was a bit more expensive than previous lunches, but all attendees appreciated the ambiance and the change of venue. The use of the Trybooking system for the lunch made the work of the Treasurer in particular, much easier as it provides a full detailed record of all transactions and enables customized reports to be created.

The Trybooking system for Contact Mornings is free. Again, it enables significant reporting capacity for the Committee and will in future become the major reporting system for the Club. I thank everyone who has embraced the system and encourage all Members to continue to do so.

The auditor appointed at last year's AGM was Bandle & McAneney & Co. who have been undertaking the audit for the Club at friendship prices for many years. This company has now merged with a national practice PKF Australia Limited who have conducted this year's audit. Although we are a very small client, PKF has agreed to offer their services to WIC at the same friendship prices for as long as we require.

I would like to conclude by proposing that the current auditors, PKF Australia Limited be appointed auditors for the next financial year.

Robyn Tulloh - WIC Treasurer

26/10/2022 – 25/10/2023

Questions/Statements: There were no questions or statements.

Approval of the Treasurer's Report:

Proposed: Eman Al-Rubaei **Seconded:** Jeannie Chong **Carried** by show of hands.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

The President called upon WIC members to raise any questions or issues as General Business.

No General Business was raised.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS TO WIC's 2022/23 OFFICE BEARERS AND AGM MINUTE-TAKER:

Maya Kayali presented outgoing Committee Members with a gift. Ex-Officio Members were individually invited to the stage and also presented with a gift. Maya thanked the outgoing Committee for their hard work for WIC in 2022-2023.

Maya Kayali thanked the AGM Minute-taker and presented her with a gift.

On behalf of the Committee, Naseem Vohra (outgoing Vice President) thanked Maya for her leadership and hard work throughout the year.

The outgoing Committee Members left the stage.

Maya Kayali invited Former President Anna Prosser to preside over the election of a new Committee.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

Anna Prosser thanked the outgoing Committee for a wonderful year and declared all Committee positions vacant. She stated that the number of nominations received being equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, that she had the pleasure to declare the nominated candidates elected. Anna read the Nominations as follows:

Nominations Received for Committee Positions

Position	Name	Country	Nominator	Seconder
President	Robyn Tulloh	Australia	Maya Kayali	Stephanie Millhouse
Vice President	Marsia Gustiananda Pramono	Indonesia	Robyn Tulloh	Maya Kayali
Treasurer	Helena Chan	Taiwan	Naseem Vohra	Patricia Reeve

Secretary	Catherine Doherty	Australia	Maya Kayali	Argi Deak
Membership Liaison Officer	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Circles Coordinator	Argi Deak	Australia	Penny Gardner	Cindy Stockbridge
Publications Coordinator	Cathy Reid	Canada	Robyn Tulloh	Argi Deak
Program Coordinator	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Hospitality Coordinator	Patricia Reeve	Australia	Robyn Tulloh	Diane Osborne
Committee Member	Margaret Long	Australia	Cathy Reid	Maya Kayali
Committee Member	Deborah Tucker	United Kingdom	Robyn Tulloh	Trish Munro

Anna Prosser invited Maya Kayali to return to the stage and invited Robyn Tulloh to join her. Maya presented Robyn Tulloh with the badge of President then left the stage.

Anna Prosser called the incoming Committee Members to the stage to have their badges pinned by President, Robyn Tulloh.

Anna Prosser noted that:

- Incoming Treasurer, Helena Chan, was presently travelling overseas.
- Tricia Burritt had nominated for the MLO position but had reluctantly had to withdraw her nomination due to continued health issues following recent surgery. Tricia has been granted Absentee Membership until she is fully recovered and we wish her all the best.
- Continuing Circle Co-Ordinator, Argi Deak, was also presently travelling overseas.
- The Program Co-Ordinator position was yet to be filled and will be discussed by the incoming Committee.
- New Committee Member, Deborah Tucker, was also presently travelling overseas.

Anna Prosser asked Members to welcome the new Committee and left the stage.

9. INCOMING PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

I would like to start my term of President by giving thanks to many people, starting with Maya.

Maya has been an exceptional leader. She has given her heart and soul as well as a lot of time and hard work into the Club. Maya has left quite a legacy and the Club is in an excellent state. She has at the same time been quietly grooming me to take over her position. I just hope I don't disappoint her, or you the members.

Thank you to the members who have offered their congratulations and support since the announcement of the nominations in the Bulletin. It has been very humbling.

Thanks also to my seconder, Stephanie Millhouse who is in some small way responsible for me being in this position. I met Steph through WIC, altho' we both live in the same street – it is a very long street, not that we are bad neighbours.

Steph and I both play in the Mahjong Circle and so share the drive each week. About 2 ½ years ago Steph was the Circles Coordinator and searching for her successor. So while I was a captive audience in her car as we headed to Mahjong, Steph would slowly over a period of

weeks describe the joys of being on the Committee and encourage me to take over her role of Circles Coordinator.

Since that time I have done one year as Circles Coordinator, and 1 year as Treasurer, and now stand before you as President. The expression Jack of all trades, Master of None does come to mind.

I wish to express my thanks to the previous committee, it has been fun working together and I have developed a new set of friends.

And a special thank you to the committee members who have signed on for a further 12 months; to Argi, Cathy and Patricia who will be serving a 3rd year and for our efficient Secretary Catherine a second year.

And I wish to thank the new committee Members, welcome on board. I think the new committee has an excellent blend of old and new.

As you can see only Marsia and Margaret are the only new members here, so a very special welcome to you. Of the other new members, Helena is in Romania and Bulgaria, and Deborah in Dubai, and Argi as a returning member is in Sri Lanka. But they have all promised me they will return home.

So, as you can see this is a committee of travellers, not surprising when our club's middle name is International. I was going to name it the Marco Polo committee, after the famous 13th century Italian explorer and trader who travelled the Silk road from Italy to the Far East.

But then I remembered he stayed away from home for more than 20 years, so not such a good role model.

So maybe it can be just referred to as Robyn and her Merry Band of Women.

There are many members I know well, mostly through Circles and while serving as Treasurer. But there are some of you I do not know at all. One of my objectives this year is to correct that, and find an opportunity to get to know everyone a little better. Please don't hesitate to help me by a tap on the shoulder to say hello to start the process.

I am looking forward to the next 12 months and the journey ahead for the Club.

A club such as ours, is only as strong and vibrant as its membership. So, it is the engagement of you as members that makes our club what it is today and what it will be in the future.

In conclusion I would just like to say that the committee stand here in our role as the facilitators, to make things happen, but we look forward to, and encourage you to provide suggestions, ideas, and feedback to guide us.

Thank you.

Robyn Tulloh

October 2023

Robyn Tulloh invited Marsia Gustiananda Pramono, incoming Vice President, to address the Meeting.

10. INCOMING VICE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

I am standing here in front of you today, feeling deeply honoured and humbled to have been nominated as the vice president of the Women's International Club. WIC has been part of my life since I arrived in Canberra almost 2 years ago accompanying my husband

who is appointed as the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia. Although Canberra is not a new city for both my husband and I as we completed our PhD at the ANU almost 20 years ago, but this posting become very special because WIC offer me a place to forge friendships, to discover my new passions, to enjoy Canberra's nook and cranny and to constantly be inspired by WIC members whom I met in every gathering. WIC has undoubtedly enriched my life, beyond the diplomatic community, and certainly beyond the online teaching classroom which I conduct for my students in Jakarta as I slowly carve my academic career path. Not only that, and more importantly, WIC has also provided a platform for me to share my joy and pride as an Indonesian to promote Indonesian cultures through the circles that I lead.


Representing the international members is one of the roles of the WIC Vice President. I would like to sincerely thank my nominator Robyn Tulloh and seconder Maya Kayali for entrusting me with this important responsibility. I would like to thank my dear friend Naseem Vohra, Spouse of the Indian High Commissioner, for her contribution and dedication and the fantastic job we witnessed she had done during her tenure as WIC Vice President. Recorded in WIC history, this is not the first time that a spouse of Indonesian Ambassador is selected as Vice President. My predecessors have set wonderful examples and set a high standard for this position, and I hope to build on their legacy. I look forward to work hand in hand with Robyn and alongside the wonderful group of women in the new committee. I will work to the best of my ability and I believe that we can achieve great things together and create many special happy moments for us to remember and to look back later on with a smile.

Marsia Gustiananda Pramono
October, 2023


11. MEETING CLOSURE

Before closing the meeting Robyn Tulloh, President, asked if there were any final questions or comments from the floor. None having been put forward, Robyn declared the Annual General Meeting closed at 12.04pm.

Signed as a true and accurate representation of the business transacted by the Club at its Annual General Meeting held on 25 October 2023.


Maya Kayali
President 2021-2023

Date: 28/10/2023


Jennifer Garnett
AGM Minute-taker

Date: 30 October, 2023