

Our Golden Years

Editor's welcome

What a great time we've had visiting ethnic seniors groups this past winter. The ECCV team has been out and about meeting seniors, eating some fantastic food and most importantly listening to your issues. These visits help us represent your concerns to policy makers. They have also inspired us to feature a new group in each edition of Our Golden Years. To start us off the Northern Region Indian Seniors Association in Northcote have warmly opened their doors to us.

The new Census data makes interesting reading. Our Aged Care Policy Officer, Nikolaus Rittinghausen talks us through how Australia has changed. If you are an incorporated association you should also read about some important changes that affect you. Finally, many of you have collections of cultural objects and stories. Find out about help to store and document them so that they may be enjoyed by future generations. Enjoy!

Kate Ling

Editor, Our Golden Years and ECCV Seniors Project Officer

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'To be interested in the changing seasons is a happier state of mind than to be hopelessly in love with spring.' George Santayana

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A quarter of Victorians are from a non-English speaking background.



The 2011 Census: a snapshot

The Census results are in. So what are the big changes since 2006? We thought we would share some of our discoveries with you – look out for them through the rest of this newsletter.

The Census figures tell us that people from a non-English speaking background cannot be seen as a minority group anymore, we represent a main group in Victoria.

The Australian Census is carried out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics every five years. To find out more visit www.abs.gov.au

Nikolaus Rittinghausen

ECCV Aged Care Policy Officer



*Australia's population has grown to 21.5 million, an increase of 1.5 million.
5.4 million people now call Victoria home.*

Are you an incorporated association? Notice of changes

In July, Consumer Affairs Victoria wrote to all incorporated associations about some important changes. This is because the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 is being replaced by a new Associations Incorporation Reform Act on 1 November 2012.

What does this change mean for incorporated seniors groups?

You will be able to keep records in any language if an English translation is available on request. You will be able to trade, other than for the purpose of distributing profit to members. There should be less reporting obligations for smaller associations.

How can we find out more?

Consumer Affairs Victoria will hold information sessions about the changes in October, November and December 2012. These sessions will help you understand your association's reporting obligations and give you an opportunity to ask questions about the Act and the Module Rules.

Information sessions will be held in English and some other languages.

For details about the English information sessions go to www.consumer.vic.gov.au/associations For details about the other languages information sessions, please contact Consumer Affairs Victoria before 5 October by phone on 8684 6459 or email to multicultural.consumers@justice.vic.gov.au. A representative from Consumer Affairs Victoria will confirm your booking.

Yanping Xu,

Senior Education Adviser, Consumer Affairs Victoria





Many Victorians speak languages other than English at home. 125,000 people speak Italian, 117,000 speak Greek, 104,000 speak Mandarin, 87,000 speak Vietnamese, 73,000 speak Cantonese and 68,000 people speak Arabic.

Help for ethnic groups holding historical material

The Multicultural Communities' Collection Project will help ethnic community groups to document and preserve the material they hold and the stories they carry about their immigration and settlement experiences.

Professional experts can visit your community group and help you to describe your collections. We can also help you find out about other things you can do to look after your collection, and what kind of support is available.

Museums Australia (Vic) will offer training in two areas. Firstly, they can teach you to use a computer program which can list and catalogue photographs, documents, textiles and objects in the collection. Secondly, they can teach you how to safely store your precious archives so that they remain for future generations.

These materials, and the stories behind them, are an important part of our cultural heritage. We hope this project will help preserve your cultural items and stories for future generations in your community and for Victoria as a whole.

The project is managed by Museums Australia (Vic) and supported by the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Pratt Foundation, and the Victorian Multicultural Commission. It is open to all ethnic community groups that hold cultural collections and would like professional help to look after them.

For more information contact Dr Helen Light AM on 9699 2639 or 0416 096 160 or helenlight@netspace.net.au.



Almost a third of Victorians aged 65 and over, were born overseas in non-English speaking countries. The largest ethnic groups are Italian, Greek, German, Dutch and Maltese.

Additional communities that are starting to age in large numbers are the Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian, Malaysian, and Sri Lankan communities.



Meet the Northern Region Indian Seniors Association – the achievers (NRISA)

Did you know?

- The largest ethnic groups in Victoria were born in India, China and Italy.
- There are 111,000 Indian people living in Victoria. 6,300 are over 65. The Indian community is one of Victoria's fastest growing migrant populations.

This Northcote-based group started in January 2008. Today there are 128 members from all over Melbourne. About 50 people attend the monthly meetings on Sundays for information, lunch and socialising. When possible, weekly activities are offered like Zumba, Bollywood dancing and yoga. Distance and transport can be the biggest problem for members. A new grant will help the group connect with members that are isolated. They will provide transport to help members attend as well as a program to visit members not able to attend.

The NRISA stays connected through representation on the Federation of Ethnic Seniors Group and the Federation of Indian Associations of Victoria. They have also recently become a member of the Council of the Ageing Victoria (COTA).

For more information about the NRISA please contact: Professor Santosh Kumar (President) on 0411 136 612 / santosh.kumarau@gmail.com or Nalin Sharda (Secretary) on 0402 108 512/ nalinsharda@gmail.com

Member profile: KLS Bhagat

We asked KLS Bhagat, who is known as KAWAL BHAGAT, some questions to share with you. He is 78 years-young and a fit and active yoga instructor, massage master and landscape painter. Kawal Bhagat currently gives free yoga classes. Perhaps his background in skydiving and parasailing helps!

1. What is your favourite family belonging and why does it have special significance?

I am from a soldier family. My uncle General PS Bhagat was the first Indian officer to win the Victoria Cross award. This is my most treasured possession.

2. Do you have a life lesson that you can offer younger generations?

One day walking in the Indian Himalaya I sat beside a small pond to rest and watched the fish swimming. A frog jumped into the pond, making the water muddy. After some time the mud disappeared and the water became clear again. I realised that the water is like our mind. Something happens, our emotions get stirred up and we can't see clearly, but as time passes it settles and becomes clear again.

3. Do you have any new traditions you have built with your family and community since coming to Australia?

Of course we have changed. It is important to be flexible. For example, here you give advice to the younger generation but you don't check up on them to see if they take your advice. You are not detached but being attached. In India it was normal to check up.

4. Why is this seniors group important to you?

I come here to give something and to learn something. It is also a good way to keep in touch with people.

5. What are your hopes for the future?

My dream is that there should be no religious conflict. That we finally find one shared path for humanity.

