

A year in review. 2023-2024



**Australian
Red Cross**

**SOCIETY OF WOMEN
LEADERS**



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Thank you from the National Chair.

SUSAN WYNNE | NATIONAL CHAIR

The past year has been a particularly meaningful and reflective one as I prepared to pass on the National Chair role after nearly four incredible years. I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the exceptional Row McGilvray for stepping into this role. There is truly no one better suited to lead. Her unwavering dedication and commitment to Society of Women Leaders (SWL) are unparalleled, and I am thrilled to see how she will shape this position and make it her own.

It was a momentous year to conclude my tenure, marked by the celebration of our 10 year anniversary and the gathering of so many members. The pride and energy in the room were contagious, and every conversation I had that evening was filled with gratitude for the impact Australian Red Cross (ARC) facilitates through our support.

Equally inspiring was the launch of Rising Women Leaders (RWL), a project long in the making. Witnessing the emergence of the next generation of female philanthropists was extraordinary. I was blown away by the maturity, passion, and vision of

these young women, whose presence reaffirms hope for the future.

This year also reminded us of the world's duality—its worst moments juxtaposed with its best displays of humanitarian support. In these uncertain and often unsettling times, for many, the only constant is the knowledge that ARC will always be there, providing care and compassion when it's needed most.

Tragically, we also mourned the sudden loss of a remarkable man, Kym Pfitzner. His passing was a profound shock, a reminder of how precious and fleeting life can be. Kym was not only a true friend to SWL but also an extraordinary human being whose legacy will endure in the hearts of those who knew him.

Reflecting on these moments, I hope this Year in Review serves as a powerful reminder of the incredible journey we've shared—a journey beyond charity, rooted in the empowerment of individuals, families, and communities. What sets us apart is not just the financial support we provide but the deep connection to the causes we champion.



Serving as National Chair has been an honour beyond words, and I am deeply grateful for the trust and support you have shown me. I want to acknowledge the exceptional Executive Leadership Team—Row McGilvray, Diana Cregan, Kate Ericson, Barbara Fletcher, and our beloved former ARC Liaison, Rylan Turner. To our dedicated committee members, thank you for your passion and steadfast commitment to sustaining SWL.

Finally, and most importantly, my deepest thanks go to you—our members and supporters. Your unwavering generosity and boundless spirit embody the remarkable essence of SWL.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary journey.

Thank you from the Deputy CEO.

PENNY HARRISON | DEPUTY CEO, AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS



This year, ARC has taken critical steps toward our goal of building a transformed, resilient humanitarian organisation. Like others in the humanitarian sector, we face rising demand for our services, which calls for continued innovation and a clear focus on sustainable, impactful action. Our core areas - Emergency Services, Migration, International Humanitarian Law, International Programs, and Community Programs - position us to respond effectively, both at home and globally.

SWL has proven invaluable in this journey, providing not only financial support but a steadfast dedication to our shared goals as a philanthropic partner. Your collective commitment has amplified our reach and impact, with members contributing generously through time, resources, and leadership to support governance, fundraising, and event hosting. These efforts continue to play a vital role in our ability to deliver essential services.

This past year, SWL raised an impressive \$764,149 through member donations and fundraising activities, which has been committed to support key ARC

programs such as International Disaster Response, and Baby Hub in Galiwin'ku. Your contributions are tangible examples of the impact we can make together, from providing safe spaces for homeless youth through initiatives like Night Café to enabling delegates to deploy internationally in response to humanitarian crises such as the conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East or the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria.

We extend our gratitude to National Chair Susan Wynne as she steps down after years of service and commitment to SWL's growth and impact. Thanks to her leadership, the SWL membership has grown stronger, and our work continues to reach new heights.

This year also marked the launch of RWL, a vibrant new community of young like-minded women passionate about philanthropy and social impact. Their enthusiasm for humanitarian causes and commitment to collective giving will help shape the future of our shared mission, and we are excited to see the impact they will create.

In March, we celebrated SWL's 10th Anniversary Gala, a milestone honouring the legacy of Lady Helen Munro Ferguson and the remarkable journey



Australian Red Cross Deputy CEO, Penny Harrison gives her address at the SWL 10th Anniversary Gala

of the women who have raised over \$6.5 million for ARC initiatives since 2014, resulting in more than \$7.2 million when including influenced giving. We extend our heartfelt thanks to incoming National Chair Row McGilvray for her leadership in organising this milestone event and for championing the SWL app, which will strengthen connections among members.

Special recognition goes to Caroline Furlong of the Blackmore Family Foundation, who demonstrated outstanding philanthropic leadership in becoming the first Lady Helen Munro Ferguson member and contributing an incredible \$200,000 to support SWL pledges. This membership category, introduced for the first

time this year, invites SWL members to deepen their impact through a significant annual contribution.

Looking ahead, ARC remains committed to advancing our core strategic priorities, including addressing the humanitarian impacts of climate change and embedding First Nations Centrality into our approach. The steadfast support of SWL will continue to be essential, helping us unite resources and leaders to build a stronger, more sustainable ARC.

Thank you to every member of SWL. Your dedication exemplifies the heart of our work and reminds us that humanity shines brightest when we unite for a common purpose and achieve extraordinary things.

Our history, our vision, our community.

More than 100 years ago, Lady Helen Munro Ferguson established ARC by engaging talented, committed, and compassionate women dedicated to a lifesaving mission. In 2014, her tradition continued when SWL was formed to unite and engage a group of generous and purpose-driven women.

Today, SWL is the leading circle of giving in Australia and our vision is

clear – to bring together a collective of Australian women who raise funds for ARC, reducing humanitarian suffering and building a world where vulnerable women and children feel safe, protected and empowered to thrive.

SWL is part of the Tiffany Circle, a growing global movement of female philanthropists from countries including the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, and Switzerland who support Red Cross National Societies.



The three images symbolise truth, hope, mercy, faith and humanitarianism—even in the middle of battle—and heroic womanhood. Their century-old history joins the women of the United States' North and South in giving aid to all peoples. This \$10,000 gift level of the Tiffany Circle represents the sum of the two \$5,000 contributions that the Women's Relief Corps of the North and the United Daughters of the Confederacy of the South gave to commission the windows.

SWL is a collective of committed women leaders and philanthropists who embrace and engage women in our communities, across the country and around the world and together we:

- advance the humanitarian mission of ARC
- bring together like-minded women who are making a difference
- make a measurable impact on important issues facing our communities
- improve the lives of vulnerable women, children, families and communities
- build strategic alliances for change
- lend our voice to the issues we believe in most
- lead through philanthropy

Each year members donate \$10,000 or more to ARC, or \$500 or more for RWL members. These funds are pooled at the Annual Members Meeting and members then vote on which ARC programs these funds will support. Coming together to advance the work of ARC and advocate humanitarian support is at the heart of what we do. Collectively, we achieve more together.



Agnes 'Anne' Carswell 1942, a highly trained nursing sister and humanitarian who worked for over 20 years for the British Red Cross, the International Committee of Red Cross and the Australian Red Cross Society. Painting by artist Gwynneth Boyce.

Just as ARC is guided by seven fundamental principles - humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality - members of SWL are guided by seven core values being compassion, optimism, integrity, excellence, loyalty, collaboration and gratitude.

Funding.

This year, SWL raised a total of **\$764,149** through membership donations and fundraising. Since its inception in 2014, SWL has raised **\$6,533,090** and with influenced giving, a total of **\$7,253,984**.

The following programs have been supported this financial year.

Baby Hub*	\$173,876
Connected Women*	\$165,000
National Society Partnerships - Timor Leste and Mongolia*	\$160,000
International Crisis and Disaster Response*	\$123,000
International Humanitarian Law*	\$108,171
Young Parents Program	\$15,900
Night Cafe	\$15,000
Domestic Emergency Services, Migration & Community Programs	\$3,202
Total FY24 funds allocated	\$764,149

Notes:

- RWL contributed \$30,702 towards the total pledge for Baby Hub.

- Annual membership donations are aligned to 1st June to enable upfront funding for the next financial year.

*The impact of these funds will be reported next year.



A family reunited in the Makemba province through the Restoring Family Links program.
Image: ICRC /Juliana Amador Mesa

Program updates.

Disaster Management with Vanuatu Red Cross

Funding provided in FY23 for FY24 \$117,000

Total funding by SWL \$585,000

SWL has provided philanthropic funding to the Red Cross Movement in the Asia Pacific region, contributing to a vital partnership between ARC and Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS).

Vanuatu is recognised as one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, frequently facing severe cyclones, earthquakes, flooding, and volcanic eruptions. These disasters can severely impact social and economic infrastructure, the environment, property, and overall development, resulting in significant hardship for communities. Thus, empowering communities with the necessary skills and resources for disaster reduction and response is a top priority.

Disaster Preparedness focuses on minimising loss of life and damage during emergencies. By strategically pre-positioning relief supplies across Vanuatu's provinces, enhancing VRCS presence in remote areas, bolstering community resilience, and strengthening local skills, we aim to mitigate the effects of disasters. Preparedness efforts encompass community risk assessments, awareness sessions, first aid training, the creation of mitigation and response plans, and improvements to early warning systems. VRCS has been actively involved in response operations after three major Tropical Cyclones in 2023, which have affected its regular programming. The National Society collaborated with Vanuatu authorities to address the needs of the impacted population by providing relief supplies and implementing ongoing disaster preparedness, shelter, health, and protection initiatives, as well as gender and inclusion programs.



Image: Vanuatu Red Cross Society

Furthermore, VRCS has continued to enhance the capacity and outreach of its branches throughout Vanuatu.

How has SWL funding helped Vanuatu Red Cross?

- Effective delivery of humanitarian services and maintenance of capacity to respond
- Improved financial position of the National Society through diversification of funding

Case Study: Tropical Cyclone Lola



Image: Vanuatu Red Cross Society

Tropical Cyclone Lola made landfall on the eastern shores of Vanuatu's Maewo and Pentecost islands on the night of 25 October 2023 as a category 4 storm with 205 km/hr winds. Heavy rainfalls with flash flooding were experienced over low-lying areas and close to riverbanks causing coastal flooding.

Vanuatu Red Cross responded before, during and after the cyclone, reaching 20,370 people through:

- Distribution of emergency relief items (tarpaulins, shelter kits, blankets, mosquito nets, solar lanterns, hygiene kits, water containers)
- Awareness sessions on health, water and sanitation, hygiene, safer shelter and protection, gender and inclusion

International Disaster Response

Funding provided in FY23 for FY24 \$157,000

Total funding by SWL \$785,000

ARC International Response team coordinates ARC's support to Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and partners around the globe to deliver life-saving assistance to communities affected by disasters and crises.

Funding provided by SWL supports the International Response team to lead ARC engagement in these operations by coordinating a multi departmental task force who can mobilise financial, material, and human resources when there is a request for international support by the local National Society. These resources complement local capacity and contribute to strategic planning, evaluation and learning on disaster and crisis response operations.

In another year of compounding crises, relief aid, operational support and human resourcing has been provided to:

- Middle East Complex Crisis – which escalated in October 2023
- El Niño weather related events across the Pacific and Timor Leste 2023-24
- Landslide in Papua New Guinea in May 2024
- Floods in Afghanistan in May 2024

Ongoing operations:

- The conflict in Ukraine and the displacement and humanitarian response across Europe
- Cyclone Mocha which hit Bangladesh and Myanmar in May 2023
- Morocco earthquake which struck in September 2023
- Response to the multiple earthquakes that struck Türkiye and Syria in February 2023
- Twin cyclones (Judy and Kevin) which hit in Vanuatu in March 2023
- The Horn of Africa food security crisis (Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan)
- Displacement of refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh



Vanuatu Red Cross teams out in the communities conducting damage assessments and distributing much needed relief items following cyclone Lola.
Image: IFRC / Soneel Ram

Case Study: El Niño Flexible fund for the Pacific and Timor Leste



Left: Hygiene kits being stacked in Port Vila warehouse, Vanuatu (March 2024)

Right: Shelter Tool kits being stored in Port Vila warehouse, Vanuatu (March 2024)

Images: Vanuatu Red Cross Society

The El Niño Southern Oscillation, or ENSO, is a movement of warm ocean water to the Pacific and has far-reaching impacts affecting seasonal precipitation and temperature patterns with varied impacts. Since the confirmation of the ENSO phenomenon in the Pacific in September 2023, the western parts of the Pacific generally have experienced below average precipitation which leads to dry/drought conditions. Whereas the eastern parts have been at greater risk of flooding, tropical storms and cyclones. The irregular rise in sea temperatures associated with El Niño is not just a factor that fuels the El Niño

effect, it is also a hazard in its own right. Elevated sea temperature can have a significant impact on fisheries and coral reefs. For communities that are reliant on fisheries and livestock, this impacts livelihoods. Increased cyclone activity also carries risk of water borne disease, disruption of education and longer-term impacts on food production and nutrition, to name a few.

In response to this El Niño event and building on its strong pre-existing partnership with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), ARC International Response

team, in collaboration with the Pacific Regional team, advocated to DFAT to provide a pot of flexible funding to respond to the El Niño conditions across the region. This flexible funding would ensure there was funding available to support National Societies in the Pacific region to quickly respond to the impact of El Niño related events in their communities. The fund complements existing funding pots available in times of disaster and crises, such as the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and the IFRC Emergency Appeals (EA) so that all elements of the Red Cross Red Crescent work together to provide a comprehensive response to disasters.

In February 2024, Vanuatu Red Cross (VRCS) applied for funds from the El Niño Flexible Fund. In readiness for cyclones VRCS maintains a stockpile of essential items such as tarpaulins, solar lamps, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, kitchen sets, jerry cans, hygiene kits and blankets, with quantities specified per household.

However, the increased frequency and intensity of recent TC activity had resulted in stock levels of relief items being extremely or critically low, with VRCS lacking the prepositioned stock it needed to effectively respond to the forecasted heightened TC season. The funds provided by the El Niño Flexible Fund restocked VRCS warehouses with over 19 tonnes of relief items (tarpaulins, shelter tool kits, hygiene kits, jerry cans and solar lanterns) via a charter flight,

ensuring that they were prepared for elevated risk of cyclone activity.

In February 2024, Fiji Red Cross Society (FRCS) applied for funds from the El Niño Flexible Fund. A Tropical Depression, a precursor to a Tropical Storm or Cyclone, with wind speeds reaching a maximum of 62 kilometres per hour, hit Fijian shores on 11 February 2024 bringing heavy rainfall resulting in flash flooding and inundation of communities across the Northern Division.

Twenty local FRCS branch volunteers were activated to respond, visiting the affected communities to identify their needs for assistance, while at the same time distributing non-food items such as hygiene and dignity kits and sharing health messaging to combat the outbreak of diseases that are a high risk due to the contamination of dwelling and surrounding areas.

The funds provided by the El Niño Flexible Fund allowed the FRCS to respond to a localised disaster that fell outside the scope of typical larger scale disaster responses as well as enabling the practical application of community and branch level training to be put into action. The funding enabled the two affected branches to engage in a response operation for the first time since Tropical Cyclone Yasi in 2021.

Young Parents Program, NSW

Funding provided in FY23 for FY24 \$97,570

Funding provided in FY24 \$15,900

Total funding by SWL \$1,255,470



Kiera is a young mum in our Young Parents Program, the program has provided her with ongoing support as she navigates parenthood for the first time. Image: Lewis Buttle

The Young Parents Program (YPP) works to ensure the best outcomes for children and families by improving the capacity of young parents with complex needs aged 13 to 25 to live and parent independently. The program is designed to meet the needs of a highly vulnerable group in the community, namely pregnant and parenting young women and men who are unable to access the safety, security and support required to parent their child effectively.

YPP takes a strengths-based early intervention approach, building the capacity of young parents to live independently in appropriate housing, develop parenting skills, ensure best outcomes for their children, and break the cycle of trauma, abuse and neglect.

The Family Education and Community Supports (FECS) Team provides structured groups and individual education plans to support improved education and employment outcomes for YPP families, and facilitate the development of essential life and parenting skills. These groups support families to acquire essential living skills and develop skills and knowledge regarding issues impacting them including mental health and wellbeing, drug and alcohol misuse, child protection, sexual health, domestic violence, self-care, and child development.

The intended impact is that the young parents and their children are supported to reach their full potential within a safe environment while responding to their specific needs.

Case Studies: Young Parent Groups

Across the program, during Term 1, YPP ran weekly playgroup and parent education sessions across 3 separate sites. Including:

1. A parent education group in Western Sydney on Mondays. The group completed the Circle of Security Parenting Course. The group included morning tea and lunch for young parents and take-home grocery packs.
2. A parent education group on the Central Coast on Wednesdays. Young parents participated in a series of courses completing their RSA & RCG certification, White Card certification, and Barista's course. YPP also held social groups on the weeks that courses were not scheduled to allow clients to socialise and interact.
3. A playgroup in Randwick on Thursdays. Families enjoyed a range of themes targeted at promoting child development, a number of delicious, shared lunches, take home grocery packs, and visits from the local Child and Family Health Nurse.

Feedback from young parents:

"Everyone is very friendly and easy to talk to. I'd change nothing, everyone here is amazing and supportive"

"The ability to openly talk without judgement about issues and struggles going on in my life currently. It was great to be able to express myself in a group setting"

"I liked everything about groups"

"I enjoyed the time and learning about the circle (Circle of Security)"

"It was good talking to other adults and debriefing the past few weeks"

"We love getting out to socialise with like-minded parents, the questions really stood out for us"

Night Cafe, QLD

Funding provided in FY23 for FY24 \$114,398

Funding provided in FY24 \$15,900

Total funding by SWL \$177,570



Night Cafe is a safe space for 12-25-year olds where they can access practical supports with the assistance of volunteers including food, showers, clothing and charging station for phones. While in the space young people can access personal support from the youth workers operating the space and visiting services for referral pathways.

The program builds collaborative relationships in the youth sector to build pathways for young people to access the support they need taking a person centred and strengths-based approach.

The young people are engaged in all aspects of the program influencing which community partners are engaged, what activities are run in the space and encouraged to become volunteers.

By engaging collaborative partnerships strong referral pathways are built leading to positive outcomes for young people in housing, employment, health & wellbeing, education & training, access to transport, etc.

When vulnerable young people are engaged and given a voice through a person-centred approach, it leads to a deeper connection with the necessary support and services for each individual.

Case Studies: Good News Story

Two young women, Molly* and Allie* began accessing Night Cafe in late 2023 as they were experiencing a prolonged period of homelessness. These young women are in a relationship and are aged 19 and 21 years old respectively. They had been living in a tent for several months, moving between different locations such as public parks and underneath people's houses with their permission. Although they were connected to a local youth service intended to support this couple with housing, they were unable to obtain accommodation as there were no vacancies for couples. For this reason, they were also often unable to obtain emergency accommodation.

Whilst at the Night Cafe, they accessed a multitude of practical support such as food, showers and toiletries. They also regularly engaged in conversation with youth workers and volunteers. Allie disclosed to a youth worker that she was feeling frustrated with her living situation and that she was close to experiencing a mental breakdown. She disclosed that she planned to yell at her youth worker at the youth service due to these frustrations. The Night Cafe youth worker created space for Allie to voice her frustrations in a safe environment. She then supported Allie

to come up with a plan of how to voice her frustrations to her worker in a calm yet assertive way so that she could convey how important it was for her to obtain stable accommodation. With Allie's consent, the Night Cafe youth worker also wrote a letter of support to the youth service, indicating that Allie and Molly regularly access Night Cafe to fulfil their basic needs.

Within two weeks, Allie and Molly returned to Night Cafe and stated that the youth service was able to provide them with accommodation. Allie stated that the conversation which she planned with the Night Cafe youth worker was successful and ultimately led to her obtaining this accommodation. Allie stated that the support she and Mary received from Night Cafe kept them going throughout their difficult nine-month period of homelessness. They stated that Night Cafe is a reliable service where young people know they are going to be supported each time they visit. Allie continues to visit Night Cafe and has been enjoying her new place with Molly.

*Names changed to protect privacy.

Governance and leadership.

SWL Governance structure in 2023/2024 is as follows:

Executive Leadership Team

Barbara Fletcher
Diana Cregan (VIC Chair)
Kate Ericson
Rowena McGilvray (NSW Chair)
Rylan Turner, Australian Red Cross
Susan Wynne (National Chair)

National Advisory Committee

Barbara Fletcher (Secretary)
Diana Cregan
Kate O'Callaghan (Governance)
Rowena McGilvray
Rylan Turner, Australian Red Cross
Selena Spring
Susan Wynne (Chair)

National Programs Sub-Committee

Anita Pahor
Anne Spencer
Diana Cregan
Kerry Blake
Nelli Zinder
Rowena McGilvray
Rylan Turner, Australian Red Cross
Selena Spring (Administrator)

Gratitude for our members, supporters and sponsors.

We extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the individuals and businesses that exemplified generosity and partnership in supporting SWL and our humanitarian initiatives throughout the past year. A special thank you to the gracious hosts who organised remarkable events for our members and guests, fostering connection and collaboration within our community.

Fireside Chat

Susan Wynne - NSW

Kate Ericson - VIC

Business Series Lunch

Kate O'Callaghan - VIC

Commonwealth Private, NSW/VIC

AI Fresco Lunch

Pamela Robertson-Gregg - NSW

Selina Williams - VIC

10th Anniversary Gala

Bayard Foundation

Carla Zampatti

Caroline Furlong

Cameron Douglas and qcent team

Christian Louboutin

Forestway Fresh

Nextgen

Pallion

Paspaley

Staff of Australian Red Cross

SWL App

Shareable Apps

Graphic Design

JDdesign

Supporters

We'd like to recognise a number of SWL members, their families and businesses who went above and beyond.

- Blackmore Family Foundation
- Eureka Benevolent Foundation
- LGT Crestone
- Rowena McGilvray
- Kerry Blake
- Terry Moran and Christine Soul

We also thank...

O'Conner Marsden and Associates and Pamela Robertson-Gregg for the printing of this Year in Review.

Our events and philanthropic opportunities.

Our members and guests are invited to bespoke philanthropy events where we hear from keynote speakers specialising in the humanitarian landscape and aid work from the Red Cross Movement.

Informative, unique and enjoyable, our events are a reporting tool for members to understand the impact their pooled funds are having on the projects and initiatives our giving circle support.

Fireside, NSW

July 2023

There's truly nothing quite like a Fireside Chat held in the warmth of our National Chair's home, where the atmosphere is both inviting and inspiring. Gathered together in such a cozy setting, we engaged in enriching conversations about the impactful programs we are funding in FY24. The open dialogue fostered a sense of community and collaboration, allowing us to share ideas, aspirations, and insights. A big thank you to Susan for graciously welcoming us into her beautiful home, making this gathering not only productive but also memorable and filled with camaraderie.

Fireside, VIC

August 2023

On a chilly Melbourne winter night, we gathered at Kate Ericson's home for our Fireside Chat, a fun and relaxed evening made even more special with the presence of Row McGilvray from Sydney. Diana updated us on funded programs and shared insights from Sanushka Mudalier at the Global Migration Lab, highlighting the significant impact of SWL's funding on refugee research in Australia.

We discussed GLOW Red, a global leadership program for Red Cross team members, and explored Row's new youth initiative for 18 to 35 year olds. Cate White provided a brief update on her experiences in Washington, where she represented Australia at the Tiffany Circle forum. We also anticipated the upcoming Geneva Conference in 2024, promising strong Australian representation. Finally, Kate shared details of the events ahead, starting with the upcoming Business Series Lunch. Many thanks to Kate for her warm hospitality in her beautiful home.



National Chair, Susan Wynne addressing guests at her home



Victorian members at the Fireside Chat



Members and guests listening to the Young Parents Program presentation

Business Series Lunch, NSW & VIC

October 2023

We had a wonderful experience during the Business Series Lunch at Commonwealth Private in both Sydney and Melbourne. Attendees enjoyed connecting and engaging in meaningful conversations before settling in to hear from the dedicated leaders of the Young Parents Program—an initiative that SWL has proudly funded for the past decade.

The event took place in a warm and inviting atmosphere, enhanced by a delicious meal that everyone thoroughly enjoyed. It was heartening to see such enthusiastic participation, fostering a spirit of community and support among members. A special thank you to Kate O'Callaghan for orchestrating such a wonderful gathering, and to Commonwealth Private for their generous hospitality. Your efforts made the event not just informative but truly memorable.

US Tiffany Circle Summit

October 2023

Cate White was privileged to be invited to represent Australia at the 2023 Tiffany Circle (TC) Summit in Washington DC. The theme of the Summit was 'A Blueprint for Action', and there were many inspiring mission focused sessions as well as presentations on 'Humanity at War' and 'Adapting our Mission in the Face of Continuing Disasters'. There was a call to action and over \$1.2 million was raised for the American Red Cross Sickle Cells Disease Initiative.

Cate spoke at the conference about our beloved SWL, and to highlight how we operate in Australia. Many in the audience were interested to hear that we were called SWL rather than Tiffany

Circle, and how we had adapted our framework to enable us to vote for the Programs that our funds were directed towards. Cate addressed how this particular method of collective giving is why many of us are so passionate about SWL and feel as though we are partners with ARC rather than merely donors.

The Summit was humbling and inspiring, and it was such a joy to be amongst this global cohort of incredible women philanthropists.

The 2025 Washington Summit will be running from 9-11 September, and we recommend that all SWL members consider taking the opportunity to meet your international Tiffany Circle sisters, and to celebrate supporting the work of the Red Cross Movement.



Left: Victorian member, Cate White addressing summit attendees

Right: Summit attendees gather for a group photo



LGT Crestone hosting members for a pre-dinner discussion on wealth management



Kate O'Callaghan and Alaine Ding enjoy a pre-dinner cocktail at Jayda

LGT Crestone bonus event and End of Year Dinner, NSW

November 2023

What a wonderful way to end the year with a kind invitation by member Amy Low to attend a round table discussion about wealth management. With topics including the power of financial literacy, managing wealth and personal finances. After our session at LGT Crestone we walked to Capella for dinner at Brasserie 1930. As you can imagine, a lot of chatting, gorgeous food and a little beverage to accompany the mood. Thank you Amy and Belinda Singh for organising a great end of year gathering.

End of Year Dinner, VIC

November 2023

The Victoria End of Year Celebration was hosted at Jayda in the heart of the Melbourne CBD. It was a beautiful, intimate dinner for the members where we enjoyed, as we always do, the opportunity to catch up and celebrate the year. In addition to being so proud to be a part of the movement that is the Australian Red Cross, we cherish the relationships we have forged with each other. Shared values and shared purpose make for wonderful connections.

NEXTGEN WISE Forum

November 2023

The NEXTGEN WISE Forum 2023, held at Terrey Hills Golf and Country Club on 28 November, was an inspiring day dedicated to supporting and advancing the next generation of female leaders. It was an incredible opportunity to be hosted by NEXTGEN, where we heard from dynamic speakers, including young female golf pros who shared their insights in pursuing success in a traditionally male-dominated sport. The forum also featured an engaging panel discussion with Susan Wynne, National SWL Chair, and Isabel Freudenstein, National Chair of RWL, who spoke about

the critical importance of mentorship and sponsorship for career growth. Panellists spanned a range of ages and career stages, reflecting on the value of mentors who empower others to embrace opportunities, build new skills, and develop confidence. Isabel highlighted inclusivity, curiosity, and flexibility as core leadership qualities, while Susan discussed her experience as both mentor and mentee.

We were honoured to see NEXTGEN extend its support by hosting RWL's table at the SWL 10th Anniversary Gala, reinforcing their commitment to supporting female leadership in their community.



Panel discussion with
Sunny McPhillips



From the left, Members Vanessa Fernell and Barbara Fletcher, Founding and Lady Helen Munro Ferguson member Caroline Furlong, Founding Member Danni Murray, and Members Jane Scotcher and Catherine Myers

Al Fresco Lunch, NSW

February 2024

This year's Al Fresco event was held at the lovely home of Pamela Robertson-Gregg in Sydney, where members gathered for an informal lunch on a beautiful day. The gathering allowed us to enjoy each other's company while sharing stories of holiday adventures and discussing the exciting year ahead for our organisation. A special thanks to Pamela for her warm hospitality and the stunning surroundings, complete with delicious food and wine.

During the event, Kerry-Anne delivered key messages regarding the new code of conduct for members, emphasising the importance of fostering genuine and respectful relationships within our

community. Her insights on expanding our knowledge of ARC beyond our immediate participation were particularly impactful.

Another highlight was the enthusiastic conversation about the upcoming RWL launch, which generated considerable excitement among members eager to empower the next generation of leaders.

We looked ahead to continued collaboration and engagement, fostering camaraderie and purpose within our group. It was a true pleasure to reconnect with everyone.

Al Fresco Lunch, VIC

February 2024

This year for Al Fresco, we had the pleasure of gathering at Selina's picturesque property in Flinders. The Melbourne sun graced us with its presence, casting a warm glow over our outdoor lunch, which we enjoyed while overlooking the vineyard. To make the occasion even more delightful, we sipped on wine made from Selina's very own grapes.

During our time together, Diana provided program updates and sought input from the group. We discussed potential programs for support, and there was significant interest in backing a Victorian-based initiative. This is increasingly challenging as there are few Victorian based programs available for us to support.

It's always heartening to see our team's commitment to making a positive impact.

Looking ahead, excitement is building for the upcoming 10th Anniversary Gala in Sydney. Many of our guests are already planning a girls' trip to join the festivities. Additionally, we explored the Geneva trip and the Washington convention, both of which promise to be exciting opportunities.

In our commitment to fostering community engagement, we invited everyone to share their valuable suggestions for potential sponsors. Member insights play a crucial role in



Members enjoy lunch at Selina's home

ensuring the success of our gatherings and enhancing our collective experience.

A highlight of the day was reconnecting with our returning member, Cate White. Cate shared insights into the differences between our Australian chapters and the Tiffany Circle she was part of during the past two years in the US. Her perspective enriches our understanding and strengthens our bonds.

We concluded the day with coffee and lively conversations about our future plans.

Thank you all for contributing to the spirit of camaraderie and purpose that defines our team. Here's to many more memorable moments together!



Art Gallery of New South Wales ready for guests

10th Anniversary Gala

March 2024

On Monday 18 March 2024 this wonderful giving circle celebrated their 10th year together at the Art Gallery of New South Wales where our National Chair Susan Wynne introduced some very significant achievements.

SWL's longest Founding Member Hayley Baillie shared with us what it means to be a part of one of the leading giving circles. Interim CEO Penny Harrison acknowledged 110 years of ARC and shared her insight to the present and future challenges facing the organisation both globally and internationally.

Susan and Penny were proud to announce that our member Caroline Furlong, along with her husband Marcus and daughter Imogen, have generously committed ongoing financial support to ARC programs. This remarkable contribution also honors Caroline as SWL's inaugural 'Lady Helen Munro Ferguson' member, highlighting her dedication to our mission.

As SWL looks beyond 10 years we were excited to launch our new initiative RWL. Both the RWL National Chair Isabel Freudenstein and Deputy Chair Lili Duncan shared with guests the process of creating this new group and what the future of this new generation of givers looks like while they support and advocate for humanitarian causes.



RWL Deputy Chair, Lili Duncan (left) and RWL National Chair, Isabel Freudenstein (right) launching the SWL youth initiative, Rising Women Leaders

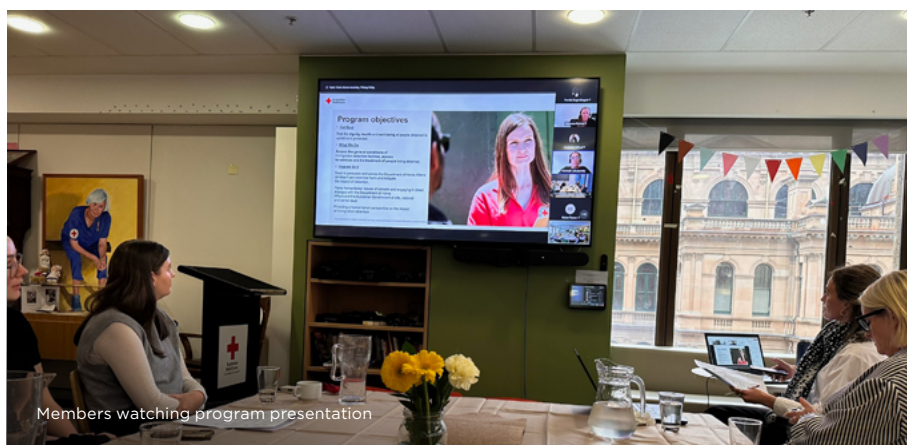
Thank you to all of our members, guests, the Blackmore Family Foundation, NextGen for supporting RWL, Kerry-Anne Johnston and the Bayard Foundation, Janie Simpson and ABC Bullion, our donors and raffle sponsors and our incredible working group - the night would not have been as great success without all.



On behalf of the Blackmore Family Foundation, Founding Member Caroline Furlong is honoured as the inaugural Lady Helen Munro Ferguson member



Founding Member Hayley Baillie, shares her love of collective giving



Members watching program presentation

Annual Members Meeting - Program Pitching

June 2024

The Annual Members Meeting was a momentous occasion as we welcomed our 10th year of Collective Giving. Held at the ARC office in Sydney, the event was a hybrid affair, with participants joining in person, from their homes or office, and from CBA in Melbourne.

The meeting began with a warm welcome from the SWL and RWL leadership, who expressed gratitude for the continued support and dedication of all members. The focus then shifted to the heart of our mission: empowering women and giving back to the community.

ARC program leaders then presented comprehensive updates on how our collective funds had been utilised to support individuals and families. The presentations showcased the tangible

impact of SWL's efforts, highlighting the power of collective action.

We then moved on to the ARC pitch session. Program leaders presented innovative and impactful initiatives, each vying for the support and funding of SWL and RWL members. The voting process, open to all members, is a crucial part of the annual calendar, empowering the community to directly influence the allocation of resources.

As the meeting drew to a close, a sense of unity and purpose permeated the room. The event had not only provided valuable insights into the work of the Red Cross Movement but also fostered a strong sense of community among the members of SWL and RWL. The collective decision-making process reinforced the giving circle's commitment to transparency, accountability, and making a lasting difference.

The power of Red Cross.



The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a global humanitarian network of 80 million people that helps those facing disaster, conflict, health and social problems.

The International Red Cross is an impartial, neutral and independent organisation whose exclusive humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war, disasters and other situations of emergency and to provide people with assistance.

Made up of three components including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 191 Red Cross Red

Crescent National Societies, and the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

National Societies embody the work and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 191 countries and 14 million volunteers give their time and expertise to make their communities safer, more resilient, and more inclusive. This is the power of humanity, and it is unstoppable.

Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems are protective symbols and are central to the laws of war. They mean 'Don't shoot - we are not part of the fight' in every language.



The Jordan Red Crescent, supported by the IFRC-DREF, distributed emergency relief supplies to 400 families affected by floods and cold waves in Jordan. Image: Monther AlHumaidi/Jordan Red Crescent

Standing alongside Australian Red Cross.



Australian Red Cross volunteer
Linda inside Relief Centre in Victoria.
Image: Australian Red Cross/Conor Ashleigh

Australian Red Cross is a member of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement with millions of members and volunteers operating in over 190 countries.

Here at home, ARC provides relief in times of crisis, whether it's a natural disaster or a personal emergency. ARC is there for children who go to school hungry, elderly Australians who live at home alone, lonely teenagers sleeping on the streets and families who have fallen on tough times.

It is working together with communities, both in Australia and overseas, to ensure they are productive, safe and resilient.

As a community of committed women leaders and philanthropists, SWL is proud to stand alongside ARC and will continue to advance its mission by embracing and engaging women in our communities, as we work towards a future where everyone feels safe, supported and empowered to succeed.

Australian Red Cross 2023/24

18,355 Australian Red Cross members and volunteers acted for humanity.

5,533 Australian Red Cross employees helped and supported people.

427 Australian Red Cross branches, units, clubs and Friends of Red Cross initiatives.

51 member-run services took place at 53 locations across Australia.

78,401 hours of volunteers connecting with older and vulnerable people through our Telecross and Telechat programs.

117,152 meals delivered to 1,077 older people.

213,000 people received support before, during and after disasters.

70 emergency activations across the country.

5.8 million+ people accessed information from disaster preparedness campaigns.

23,600+ people from 129 countries received help through our migration support programs in Australia.

16,810 people accessed our Work Right Hub website.

6,537 people participated in our “In Search of Safety” community education sessions.

19.9 tonnes of humanitarian aid products were provided across the globe.

43 Australian international aid workers were deployed to 22 countries.

822 people enrolled in our global Massive Open Online Course on International Humanitarian Law for Business.

7 First Nations communities in five states and territories were engaged to co-design programs that reflect community aspirations.

61,000+ people were trained in first aid.

\$79.2 million in donations and philanthropic gifts supported our humanitarian work.

7.2 million donated items were sold through Australian Red Cross shops.

2,900 tonnes of quality clothing that may otherwise have been sent to landfill was sold in Australian Red Cross shops.

9,653 tonnes of carbon emissions and 967 megalitres of water saved as a result of our clothing sales in Australian Red Cross shops.

1.6 million individual donations of blood, plasma, and platelets were donated to Australian Red Cross Lifeblood.

4,042 litres of donated breast milk supported some of Australia's most vulnerable babies.

559,000 Australians rolled up their sleeves and donated blood, plasma, and platelets

Organisational strategy.



Image: Australian Red Cross/Conor Ashleigh

Australian Red Cross is part of a global humanitarian movement whose mission is to reduce human suffering by mobilising the power of humanity. We are one of 191 National Societies in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement). Other Movement members are the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Alongside 16 million volunteers in 191 countries, we go where need is greatest, helping people and communities to stand tall in the face

of adversity and move towards a more resilient future. In what is our 110th year, Australian Red Cross continues to evolve to keep pace with changing volunteer, member, supporter, and community needs.

This included:

- implementation of new technology to support increased operational efficiencies, reduction in risk, and greater data-driven decision-making moving forward
- a new organisational structure aligned to our strategy and designed to support growth in impact over time

- new volunteering strategy and member growth plan to support growth in voluntary service across the organisation and within communities
- our fourth Reconciliation Action Plan to drive transformation of our commitments to real action

As always, our core priorities were:

- increase our impact
- build and grow our people
- improve their experience and connect them to our purpose (for members, volunteers, and employees)
- establish stronger organisational foundations
- grow our funding
- build the Red Cross brand

Our areas of strategic focus

Strategic Focus 1: Emergency Services and Disasters

We help build communities that are strong, resilient, and able to anticipate, respond, and recover well from disasters and climate change-related emergencies.

Strategic Focus 2: Lifeblood

We seek to increase the supply of safe and high-quality blood, plasma, and other biological products, bolstering the capacity to respond to emergencies, support medical treatments, and improve patient and community outcomes.

Strategic Focus 3: Migration

We help build fair, welcoming, and inclusive communities where migrants are safe and have their humanitarian needs met.

Strategic Focus 4: Community Activities and Programs

We build connection and resilience through volunteering and responding to the humanitarian needs of local communities.

Strategic Focus 5: International Programs

We help build stronger, more resilient international communities with increased capacity to prepare for, anticipate, respond to, and recover from crises, especially those caused by climate change.

Strategic Focus 6: International Humanitarian Law

We help achieve better humanitarian outcomes for people and communities impacted by armed conflicts.

A key concept enshrined in our organisational strategy, is we work with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, placing their cultural knowledge, leadership, values, and perspectives at the centre.



10 years of women leading through philanthropy.

For further information regarding the Society of Women Leaders,
please contact swl@redcross.org.au