

2027 Conference Newsletter Issue 1, November 2026

An Invitation from Governor Wendy

It gives me great pleasure to invite all District 23 members to join us for the **2027 Zonta District 23 Conference** in Bendigo, Victoria, from **Friday, 3 September, to Sunday, 5 September 2027**.

Our theme, **From Goldfields to Global Impact**, celebrates the journey from our rich local goldfields heritage to Zonta's global influence. It recognises the significant contributions women have made, and continue to make, in shaping our communities and creating positive change around the world. Bendigo provides a wonderful setting for us to reflect on our own Zonta journey, celebrate our achievements and consider the difference we can make together, both locally and globally.

The Conference Committee, led by Naidene Parry of the Zonta Club of Bendigo, has been working hard to develop a program that promises to be engaging, informative, thought-provoking and inspiring. There will be opportunities to hear from inspirational speakers, share ideas, celebrate achievements and explore new possibilities for our organisation.

Of course, no Zonta conference would be complete without the wonderful **Zonta Spirit**! It is an opportunity to reconnect with friends from across the District, make new connections, share experiences and enjoy the friendship and fellowship that make our Zonta community so special. I hope you will return home feeling inspired, refreshed and reinvigorated in your commitment to improving the lives of

women and girls.

The Conference will be held at **Bendigo All Seasons**, 171–183 McIvor Highway, approximately 2.7 km from Bendigo's city centre. The venue offers onsite accommodation and conference facilities, making it a convenient base for our gathering.

And why not make a little extra time to discover Bendigo and its surrounds? From its magnificent gold-rush heritage and historic streetscapes to its vibrant arts scene, beautiful gardens, excellent food and wine, Bendigo has plenty to offer.

So, please mark **3–5 September 2027** in your diary and start planning your journey to Bendigo. Whether you are a long-standing Zontian or relatively new to our organisation, you will be warmly welcomed.

I look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to Bendigo for what I am sure will be a memorable Conference, as we reconnect with Zonta friends, strengthen our friendships, share our ideas and continue working together to **make a difference in our community and globally**.

Let's bring our ideas, our energy and our Zonta Spirit to Bendigo!

Kind regards,
Wendy
Governor, Zonta International District 23

Conference Chair : Naidene Parry

Planning is well underway for the **D23 Conference 2027**, with Committee members working hard to bring you a fun, informative, thought-provoking and inspirational program.

When and Where:-
The Conference will commence on **Friday, 3 September 2027**, and conclude on **Sunday, 5 September 2027**, at **Bendigo All Seasons**, 171–183 McIvor Highway, Bendigo, approximately 2.7 km from the Bendigo City Centre.

All Seasons offers onsite accommodation, and the Committee is also working with accommodation providers nearby to secure good rates for members wishing to stay close to the Conference venue. Further accommodation information will be

provided as arrangements are confirmed.

Accessibility:-
The venue is on one level and has no stairs. Please note that some accommodation rooms at All Seasons may involve stairs, so members with mobility concerns are encouraged to check with the hotel when booking.

2027 Conference Venue : All Seasons Resort & Conference Centre





All Seasons Bendigo
https://www.allseasonsbendigo.com.au/

Here is a link for conference information on Bendigo accommodation and things to do.

https://www.bendigoregion.com.au/explore-bendigo/zonta-d23-conference-bendigo

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Our Conference Theme

Our theme, **From Goldfields to Global Impact**, reflects the journey from local beginnings to global influence and celebrates the contribution women have made – and continue to make – to our community and the wider world.

Our Conference logo was designed by **Tanya Ryan of Petit Pixel Design** and was inspired by the Bendigo Women's Memorial, a sculpture by local sculptor **Yvonne George**. The monument recognises the important role of women in the development of Bendigo, from the discovery of gold through to the present day. The sculpture was unveiled as part of the celebrations marking **150 years of gold in Bendigo**.

Gold was officially discovered at Bendigo in **September 1851**, at a location known as "The Rocks", near the junction of Bendigo Creek and Golden Gully, in what is now Golden Square. The discovery is traditionally attributed to **Mrs Margaret Kennedy and Mrs Julia Farrell**, who were associated with the nearby Ravenswood pastoral run.

Our theme provides an opportunity to reflect on Bendigo's rich history while looking forward to the impact we can make locally, nationally and globally through **Zonta's work improving the lives of women and girls**.

The Conference Committee looks forward to welcoming as many Zonta members as possible to Bendigo. We hope you will take the opportunity to arrive early or stay a little longer and enjoy all that our beautiful region has to offer, including our history, culture, food, wine and surrounding attractions.

Your Conference Team

Conference Committee:-
Governor – Wendy Quinn, District Governor
Chair – Naidene Parry, Area 4 Director
Secretary – Sue Clarke, Zonta Club of Bendigo
Public Relations – Rosalie Lake, Zonta Club of Bendigo

Committee Members
Glenda Bryson
Kathryn Patarica
Sue Edgar
Kate O'Callaghan
Genevieve Somerville

Ann Horrocks
Tiffany Gill
Shirley Turner
Jess Somerville
All Zonta Club of Bendigo members

Conference email: zontad23conf@gmail.com

Please contact us via our dedicated Conference email with any questions or queries.

We look forward to sharing more details about the program, speakers, accommodation and activities with you over the coming months.

Conference Speaker Profiles



Deborah Lawrie AM : Breaking barriers and opening doors for women

Deborah Lawrie AM made Australian history when she won a landmark 1979 sex discrimination case, becoming the first woman to fly for a major Australian airline. Her courage challenged entrenched gender discrimination and helped open opportunities for women in aviation.

Throughout her distinguished career as a commercial pilot, flight safety leader and training captain, Deborah has demonstrated the importance of challenging outdated attitudes and creating pathways for women to succeed.

Her remarkable story, shared in her memoir Touching the Sky, embodies the determination and leadership needed to advance gender equality and inspire future generations of women and girls.



Sherele Moody: Speaking out against violence towards women and children

Sherele Moody is an award-winning journalist, researcher and activist committed to ending violence against women and children.

As founder of The RED HEART Movement and the Australian Femicide Watch, she documents the deaths of women and children through initiatives including the

Australian Femicide & Child Death Map and the Memorial to Women and Children Lost to Violence. By making these deaths visible and ensuring victims are remembered, Sherele challenges society to confront violence and demand change.

Her work highlights a fundamental part of advancing the status of women and girls: their right to live safely, free from violence and fear.



Khayshie Tilak Ramesh: Building more equitable futures for women and girls

Khayshie Tilak Ramesh is a lawyer, strategist, educator and community leader dedicated to creating meaningful and lasting social change.

As Vice President and Deputy Chair of YWCA Australia and a Non-Executive Director of Gender Equity Victoria, she contributes to advancing gender equality and improving outcomes for women and girls. Her experience across housing, health, youth and multicultural communities informs her commitment to addressing systemic barriers and creating more inclusive organisations and communities.

A former Victorian Multicultural Youth Commissioner, Khayshie brings together strategic leadership and community advocacy to help build a fairer society in which women and girls can participate, lead and thrive.



Dr Skye Kinder: Advocating for equitable access to healthcare

Skye Kinder has dedicated her medical career to improving healthcare for marginalised communities across Australia, particularly people living in rural and regional areas.

Motivated by witnessing the travel and financial burdens associated with accessing specialist care, she became a passionate advocate for rural health. While studying medicine, she helped establish the first Rural Health Committee within the Australian Medical Students' Association and created a national Rural Health Summit, strengthening opportunities for regional students to contribute to advocacy and policy.

Her work highlights the importance of equitable access to healthcare—a vital part of advancing the wellbeing, opportunities and quality of life of women and girls,

wherever they live.

Skye was named Victoria's Junior Doctor of the Year in 2017 and Bendigo's Young Citizen of the Year in 2014.

Dine Around planning...

The Conference committee is planning an exciting option for the traditional dine around event. We love to showcase Bendigo – it's history, wineries and gastronomy, so one of your dining options will be a special event featuring stories of history and samples of Bendigo's gastronomy and wine.

WATCH THIS SPACE

Friday Night Dine Around

Friday 3 September 2027

OPTIONAL PAID EVENT



Keep Friday night free

Kick off your conference weekend with local food, local wine and a night full of Bendigo stories, hosted by one of our own local guides.

Did you know Bendigo was officially called Sandhurst until 1891? Come along and hear the rest of the story.

Dinner tickets go on sale with conference registrations.
More details in our next newsletter.



This is the official newsletter of Zonta International District 23,
2027 Conference - Bendigo, Victoria

Governor: Wendy Quinn
Our Conference email address is:
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Build a Better World for Women & Girls