

---

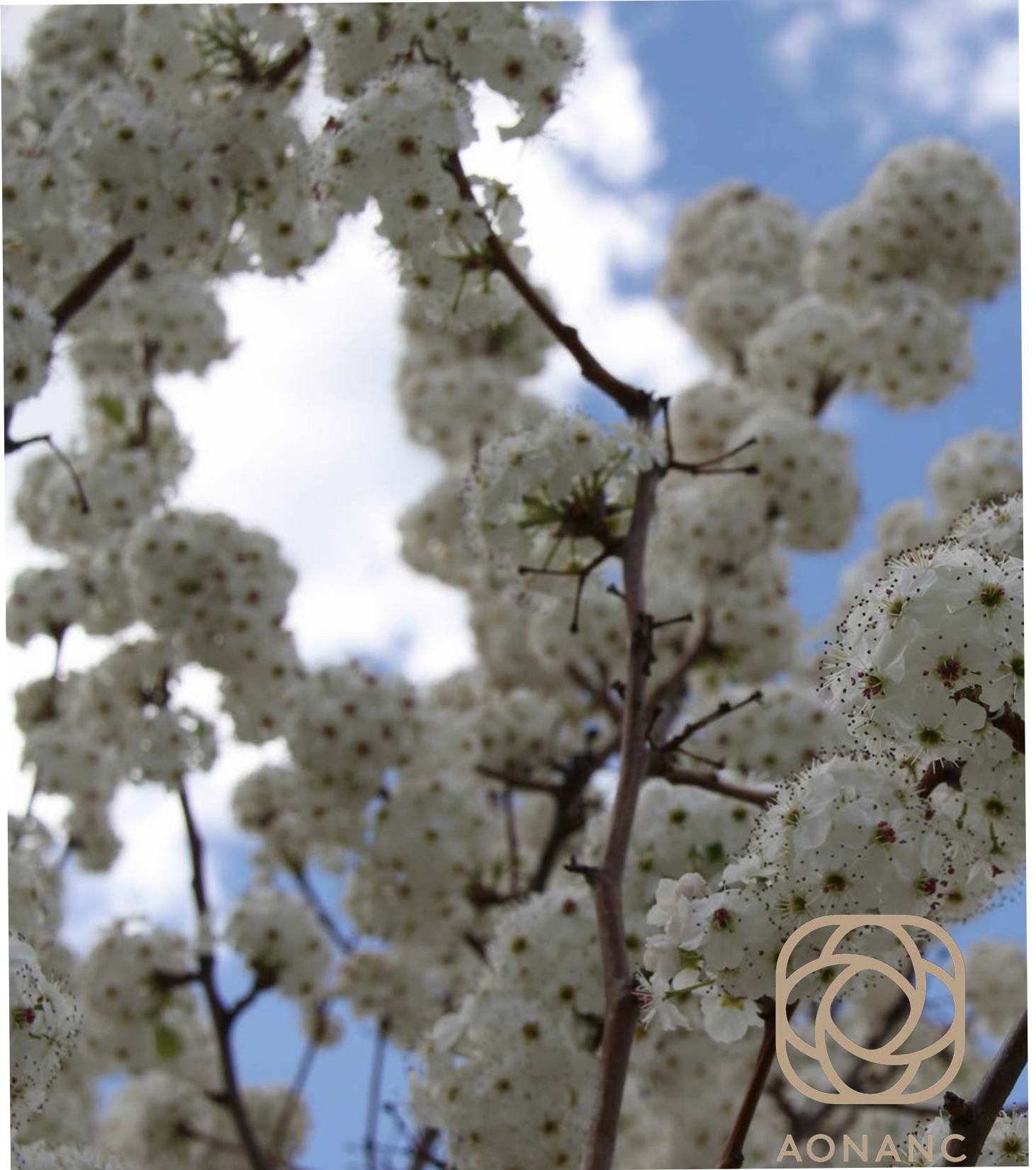
AONA

---

# VISION

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2021



AONANC

# April 2021

Welcome to the April edition of The Australian  
Ophthalmic Nurses Association National Newsletter

<b>AONA PRESIDENT'S REPORT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CELEBRATION OF BRONWYN RICH</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>AONAWA PRESIDENT'S REPORT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AONAQ PRESIDENT'S REPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>AONA INC. ANNUAL OPHTHALMIC NURSING CONFERENCE 2021</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>AONAVIC PRESIDENT'S REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>



## President's Report

### Joanna McCulloch

2021 is the year when AONA NSW and AONA VIC become one association. This year, AONA will focus on building its' new identity, creating a shared vision for what we want our organisation to be – its purpose, and its objectives, agreed by all members for today and the future.

Everything will change; the look of the webpage; allowing for a more inclusive profile of all the states AONA represents – NSW, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and Northern Territory, and the introduction of a Facebook page to keep us all connected to events and professional matters. To our constitution; to reflect the diversity of the states that AONA serves. At the June 26th Annual Conference, the AGM will ratify the new constitution, which will be circulated to members prior to the Sydney Conference.

We are working with the ICC, Sydney to ensure that members can attend the AGM via ZOOM, if not attending the conference in person. Take the opportunity to read in this newsletter the topics/ presentations that are proposed at the June 26th Conference, ICC Sydney. Registration for the conference will open at the end of April via the AONA website [www.aonansw.org.au](http://www.aonansw.org.au)

Our committee will also change, late in 2020 the AONA NSW committee were joined by a Victoria, SA and NT representative. In 2021, further AONA Vic members will join us, ensuring that all states' members have equal access to resources, education and support via their representatives.

Three things that will not change are the AONA logo, website domain and AONA email, which is [admin@aonansw.org.au](mailto:admin@aonansw.org.au)

AONA will endeavour to deliver to its' members quality education and networking opportunities throughout the year, continued

Eye Tele C via ZOOM and clinicals in Victoria, SA, and NSW and also potentially in Tasmania. For this association to grow, we need our members to participate in all activities, so please let us know how we can build this new group of expert eye nurses. Feedback from members is the life force of how we deliver the education that we do.

I wish all of you a happy Easter and look forward to engaging with AONA members during the year.

Joanna McCulloch

Celebration of an Amazing Life  
Bronwyn Rich  
1965 – 2021



In February 2021, Bronwyn lost her 16 month fight with Cancer. Bronwyn was an outstanding Ophthalmic Nurse, sharing her passion for ophthalmology with all. She will be remembered for her knowledge, compassion, skills, and her amazing warm smile. She was always there to help and guide a colleague, a patient, family member, carer or anyone who reached out to her.

For those who knew Bronwyn and wish to donate to her chosen charity, 'Destiny Rescue' ([www.destinyrescue.org.au](http://www.destinyrescue.org.au)) this charity is an Australian-founded, internationally recognised, not for profit organisation rescuing and caring for children who have been trafficked sold or lured into the sex trade. I knew Bronwyn for many years, through AONA and Sydney/Sydney Eye Hospital. For me, Bronwyn represented everything that I could aspire to as an Ophthalmic Nurse; I learnt so much from her about humility and human kindness and will endeavour to emulate to others what she meant to me. At the June 26th Conference 2021, Bronwyn will be honoured for her dedication to ophthalmic nursing and I wish to thank her husband and children for allowing us to share Bronwyn's life story with AONA members.

# AONAWA

## President's Report Andrea Montague

Hello from WA. Sending best wishes to our friends and colleagues around Australia, especially those in flood affected areas.

Our committee here have been busy getting the links sorted in our new website and planning our 2021 program. We managed to reschedule some of the things that we had planned for last year and we held our first seminar last Saturday, March 20th.

Embracing change we tried a new venue, for a variety of reasons, not the least being the in-house tech support. What a game changer! Due to Covid we had already begun exploring options of speakers coming in remotely and whilst we no longer had restrictions, we took the opportunity to have some fabulous out of town guests. Our broad topic for the morning was Indigenous Eye Health and we had 48 delegates present. We heard from Dr Guy Gillor from Melbourne University, who spoke about the Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision. We also heard from Associate Professor Angus Turner from Broome WA who spoke about the new Hub being set up there by Lions Outback Vision. Both of these speakers gave us insight into the national and local services available and highlighted their direction for improvements. We also had Dr Randolph Dobson, RMO for LOV speak about his experience on the Outback Vision Bus in person, while Angus was on the screen via zoom. Technology worked a treat with interaction between audience and both speakers. We also had a

heartfelt, stirring presentation on Cultural Sensitivity from a Social worker Prem Sachar, and an incredibly interesting and motivating talk entitled Nutrition, Gut Health and Eye Disease from Dr Jo Richards. Bausch and Lomb were our sponsors of the event.

The new venue worked well so we have booked it again for our next seminar in June. Topics to be covered are around Paediatric eye conditions. We very much look forward to that.

Stay safe

# AONAQ

## President's Report Pene Gill

A big welcome back everyone! I think we are all happy to see the back of 2020!

2021 has started well, with our strategic meeting held in February.

Our Executive committee had a productive morning discussing and organising educational events for the year.

The first Clinical meeting was held at the end of February. This meeting was well attended at Westside Private Day Hospital in Taringa. Dr Phillipa Sharwood gave a presentation on Paediatric Cataract. This was followed by a member led discussion on Ophthalmic Practice. So good to have face to face back. However, thanks to the development of Zoom, we were additionally able to provide the meeting to members unable to attend.

At this meeting we recognised Jiorgie Collingridge – she was the highest achieving RN for the QUT Principles of Ophthalmic Nursing course in 2020. Well done Jiorgie on this wonderful achievement!

Our popular meeting is back in May at the Gold Coast University Hospital. Check the website closer to the date for all the details. We look forward to seeing you there.

Last year we postponed our annual conference to coincide with the RANZCO meeting. Again, it will be happening in November. Stay tuned!

A few reminders – Membership renewal is due by 30th June 2021. Educational grants are available for existing financial members. See the members area of the website for details.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to seeing as many of you (in person) at the upcoming Clinical Meetings.



# AONA INC. ANNUAL OPHTHALMIC NURSING CONFERENCE 2021- SYDNEY 'EYE CONTACT: WORKING ACROSS BORDERS'

**SAVE the DATE:**  
**Saturday June 26, 2021**

The Australian Ophthalmic Nurses Association (AONA) is pleased to report that their Annual Conference titled 'Eye Contact: Working across borders' is currently scheduled to take place on Saturday June 26, 2021 at the International Convention Centre, Darling Harbour, SYDNEY, NSW.

This year the focus will be on the current amalgamation between NSW the other Ophthalmic Nursing Associations in VIC, SA, NT and TAS. The merger is reflected in this year's title; connecting ophthalmic nurses for educational opportunities, research and resources also networking plus engagement in ophthalmic issues across the border states and territories.

The program will incorporate the following guest lectures starting with the 'Opening Address'- lead by the President of AONA, Joanna McCulloch, CNC- Ophthalmology from the Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital. Joanna will announce and celebrate the current amalgamation of the Ophthalmic Nursing Associations.

Dr Con Petsoglou, our Patron, will talk about COVID-19 and how this has affected Ophthalmology, in the 'Welcoming Address'. In addition, presentations on 'Diabetes Management' will speak to the urgent need for all clinicians working within the ophthalmic community, to reduce the potential poor vision outcome of this disease. Stem cell research, macular oedema, ophthalmic pharmacology, the 'Trachoma Program', the 'Low Vision Project' etc. will combine to form an excellent line up. As in previous years, the AONA Committee has decided to add four - 5 minute timeslots for the Industry to present a topic of their choice.

In consultation with the AONA Committee and the ICC, **Morning Tea (1000-1045) and Lunch (1245-1400)** will be served with the Industry, directly adjacent to the main conference meeting space. Therefore, delegates will have easy access to the Industry during breaks and at all times during the meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you all again,

**Cheryl Moore**

AONA - Vice President/ Education

## **Conference Information:**

**AONA Conference 2021- 'Eye Contact: Working across borders'**

Date: Saturday June 26, 2021

Time: 0730-0830- Registration, 0830-1530- Conference meeting

Venue: ICC, Darling Harbour, SYDNEY, NSW

Contact AONA Inc. via the webpage: [www.aonansw.org.au](http://www.aonansw.org.au)

***Registration will commence soon- make sure you renew your membership to take advantage of the member registration rate at the conference.***

# AONAVIC

## President's Report Robyn Johnston

Dear Members,

What a challenging 12 months we have travelled. We seem to have settled into a new COVID-19 life style here in Victoria. Our workplaces are back to full capacity and we as ophthalmic nurses are back doing what we do best – caring for our patients. While masks remain mandatory in healthcare settings, I still miss my patient's smiling faces as they leave to go home after their episodes of care. But then again, "the eyes have it"! I do see happiness and gratitude in their eyes, even if one is patched.

The merger with AONA (based in NSW), to consolidate AONA members across New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia, Northern Territory and Victoria is well on its way. AONAVIC memberships have now been transferred over to AONA, and each of our members will have received an e-mail from Pat Usher (Secretary) advising of this momentous occasion. Pat will also provide details on how to access your account at [www.aonansw.org.au](http://www.aonansw.org.au). Through our merger, AONAVIC members have access to the AONA online learning. I thoroughly encourage participation in the online events. They are educationally worthwhile and provide CPD Points.

Pat Usher (VIC) is now a member of the AONA (NSW) Committee, and Heather Machin (VIC), Anne Lentakis (SA) and Anna Huigen (NT) are engaged in the AONA National Committee. Thank you ladies for your ongoing dedication to our organisation.

There will be a small group of AONA members (at the moment AONA VIC Committee members) that shall come together to organise local Clinical Meetings in Victoria. We are meeting in April to start to organise a Clinical Meeting for late 2021. Anne Lentakis will continue to coordinate Clinical Meetings in South Australia. On that note Anne could do with some assistance in organising these events in Adelaide. If you could be of assistance please contact Anne on [Annel@kingswoodeyecentre.com.au](mailto:Annel@kingswoodeyecentre.com.au).

Over the years AONAVIC has shared ophthalmic information, and exchanged knowledge, on a wide range of clinical and organisational aspects of ophthalmology that are relevant to nurses, medical and allied health professionals involved in eye care services.

AONAVIC was established in 1998 under the banner of AONA. It became an official Association in 2000 under the leadership of Founding President and now Life Member Tim Puyk, with subsequent Incorporation in 2008. Times have changed since then, and in this day and age, there is greater value in working as one organization, both as professionals and as an organization. It is wonderful to return back to AONA and help connect our nation's ophthalmic nursing professionals, share our resources and talents, and move forward.

As the final President of AONAVIC, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the various members who have been on the Committee and worked to provide ongoing education to our Members. In particular I would like to thank the current Committee for their ongoing commitment to our organisation – Heather Machin, Pat Usher, Anne Lentakis, Kris Spence and Colleen Flanders, you are amazing women, thank you. As an organization we have achieved so much. We have been instrumental in developing the national standards and supporting education to nurses across the tri-state region. I cannot wait to see what we will achieve when we all work as one.

Good luck to everyone and I look forward seeing you at future AONA educational events