



## 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

**HELD: Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025 @ 7.30pm AEDT (Melb)**

Time	Item
7.30	<p><b>1. Meeting Open &amp; Welcome</b> (President as Chair of Meeting)</p> <p><i>Welcome to the AGM, thank you for attending. It has been an honour to serve you throughout 2025, as your President.</i></p>
	<p><b>2. Apologies:</b> Oksana Caretti, Rebecca Share, Araks Nazarian, Cynthia Jones-Bryson, Mary McCann, Christine Waring, Wendy Scully, Margret Keeble, Penelope Gervaise, Serena Lindeman, Catherine Storm, Linda Ford, Sue Cummusky, Rachael Hart, Louise Macdonald, Sue Younis, Kelly Maskell, Joanne Cooke, Weis Mauduit, Rose Hudson</p> <p><b>3. Attendees:</b> Georgia Skelton, Tracey Tau, Kathryn Campbell, Sarah Mensforth, Michele Cameron, Uri Bouman, Kylie Bannerman, Ginetta Rossitano, Fiona Cooper, Christine Martin, Lorraine Gill, Jo Honan, Delphine Nicholson, Julia Watson, Sandy Forrester, Rachel Henry, Lisa Watt, Amber Louison-Suwal, Robynne Dowd, Kelli Dart-Fagan, Chantelle Westlake, Michaela Manning, Irene Moore, Marea Bright, Felicity Northeast, Christina de Prada, JD Mannington, Elly Stemperdink, Jess Maddox, Angela Sullivan.</p>
	<p><b>4. Minutes</b></p> <p><b>a. Passing September 2025 Meeting Minutes</b> <b>Motion:</b> to Approve the September Meeting Minutes <b>First:</b> Amber Louison- Suwal <b>Second:</b> Christine Martin</p> <p><b>b. Confirmation of the 2024 AGM Minutes</b> <b>Motion:</b> to Confirm the Minutes of the 2024 AGM <b>First:</b> Sarah Mensforth <b>Second:</b> Michele Cameron</p>
	<p><b>5. Financials – Treasurer’s Report</b> <b>Motion:</b> to Approve Financial Reports for the 2025 year &amp; Ratify payments made by the Committee <b>First:</b> Georgia Skelton <b>Second:</b> Christine Martin</p>
	<p><b>6. 2025 President’s Wrap Report</b></p> <p><i>It's been a significant year for Millinery Australia, thanks to an excellent committee. We've supported each other both in our volunteer roles and personally, highlighting the value of community within this group. I'm proud to work alongside Tracey Tau, Kathy Campbell, Sarah Mensforth, Jo Peterson, Sandy Forrester, Jo Cooke, Julia Watson, Amber Louison–Suwal, and Serena Lindeman.</i></p>

Time	Item
	<p><i>I want to acknowledge several key contributors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracey Tau, A strong and valued Vice President, was instrumental in the Hat Walk's success and took charge of our block Library.</li> <li>• Kathy Campbell served as Secretary with consistent professionalism and also shared her legal expertise.</li> <li>• Sarah Mensforth provided clear financial oversight as Treasurer, helping prevent a fee increase for 2026.</li> <li>• Jo Peterson fostered community engagement on social media and the website and led the 2025 Design Award.</li> <li>• Sandy Forrester showed creativity and dedication leading the archives team and managing numerous events.</li> </ul> <p><i>In addition to the diligent efforts of our committee, we have benefited greatly from the dedication of many members who have volunteered their time and expertise throughout the year. Activities such as the Archives, Hat Walk, Block Library, Marvelous Millinery Retrospective, Design Award, Student Award, Judging, Gala, photo shoots, Newsletter, Stitch and Chats, graphic art, administrative support, and State Shows could not have been accomplished without the collective ideas, assistance, and commitment of our volunteers. I extend our sincere gratitude to all who contributed to these initiatives.</i></p> <p><i>Lauren Richie, Chris Mullane, Fiona Cooper, Rachael Hart, Lisa Watt, Lisette Margini, Michele Cameron, Christine Martin, JD Mannington, Catherine Storm, Kelly Dart-Fagan, Anita Marshall, Fiona Eichler, Kylie Bannerman, Angela Sullivan, Rose Hudson, Louise Macdonald, Irene Moore, Phillip Rhodes, Oksana Caretti and Christine Waring.</i></p> <p><i>Our year started with the news that Kangan Institute were donating both its block collection and the Late Paris Kyne's collection to Millinery Australia. The process of moving, storing, cataloguing, and planning their use was both exciting and daunting, as we aimed to make these resources available to our members while preserving them for years to come. Although our grant application to help with this was unsuccessful, I recommend we re-apply next year. Tracey Tau has been an excellent custodian and manager, and The Essential Hat has proven to be an ideal location for the collection. The initial three-month trial ended in October. The committee have decided to remove the membership fee; introduce half-day blocking fees and maintain the full-day option. We ask for your patience over the next month or so as the new committee works with Tracey to develop the next stage of the plan. Rest assured, our goal is to keep access easy and affordable. If you need to block before the new plan becomes official, please contact Tracey at The Essential Hat for assistance.</i></p> <p><i>Led by Sandy Forrester, our archives team showcased 30 years of history at the MAArvelous Millinery Retrospective during Heritage week. The event was well received, with guests calling it the happiest millinery event they'd attended. Thanks to the subcommittee's dedication, the State Library of Victoria will now house and preserve our archives. Final work on this will conclude in 2026.</i></p> <p><i>Many of our members got behind another fundraiser through Milliners 4 Recovery, this time led by Bec Bayss. The event raised \$12660 for flood affected communities in NSW.</i></p> <p><i>The Design Award, led by Jo Peterson under the theme "Celebration," was once again a testament to the talent of all participants. Judges Louise Macdonald, Michele Cameron, and stylist Aleisha Marshall faced a tough decision. Rebecca Share won both the Design Award and the Patron's Pick, with Tracey Tau coming in second and Angela Sullivan taking third place.</i></p>

Time	Item
	<p><i>This year, the standard for the Student Award was raised, with judges Phillip Rhodes, Irene Moore, and Tracey Tau awarding Kelley Maskell the first ever perfect score. Caroline Rayner took second place, while Pam Kelly placed third. Additionally, Kylie Bannerman received the Mary Lock Encouragement Award from Michelle Cameron.</i></p> <p><i>This year, we experienced the heartbreaking loss of our cherished member and dear friend, Alison Morgan. To honour Alison's memory and the significant impact she had on our community, we commemorated her legacy by awarding two special prizes in her name. The milliner prize was awarded to Jo Peterson, while the student prize was presented to Kelly Maskell. Alison was loved by many and her warmth, generosity, and passion for millinery will be deeply missed by all who knew her.</i></p> <p><i>The Gala held at the bank offered a remarkable atmosphere, with an increased presence of fashion industry professionals—a trend that is expected to continue next year. Congratulations are due to Rachel Hart and her subcommittee for their exceptional efforts. The Design Award theme for 2026 is "Enchanted" and the student theme is "Curious." The 2027 theme will be announced at the Gala, which is scheduled for July 3 at the Bank on Collins. Judging will take place in June; so please plan on participating.</i></p> <p><i>We thank our Associates, suppliers and supporters for their support through sponsorships, prize donations, and member discounts. Special thanks to Hatters Millinery Supplies, Hat Academy, Millinery Info, Hat Atelier, Richard Shaw Photography, M &amp; M Millinery, Hat Blocks Australia, HATalk, Haute Dogs Calendar, The Hat Magazine, House of Adorn, Louise Macdonald, The Essential Hat, and Alicia Marshall. We value your partnership and look forward to continued collaboration.</i></p> <p><i>In August, members enjoyed a one-hour photo shoot with Richard Shaw. Alicia Marshall and the Essential Hat provided styling options, while Lynette Pater organized an editorial shot for those who were interested. Richard was able to successfully submit these photos to magazines, which is always exciting. This opportunity received good feedback, and I think it will be offered again in 2026. Both Alicia and Lynette are dedicated supporters of millinery and truly appreciate our craft, so I highly recommend them if they ever ask to borrow pieces for photo shoots or other opportunities. You can trust that they will take care of your work and ensure you receive proper credit.</i></p> <p><i>This year, with the assistance of Jill Humphreys, our relationship with the VRC improved significantly. I was asked to provide a survey regarding the Lillian Frank Millinery Award, and the VRC responded to our feedback by streamlining the entry process for the competition. I appreciate everyone who supported the competition this year, which resulted in 30 entries being selected for the semi-final, compared to only 12 last year. It is essential that we continue to support these competitions to ensure their ongoing availability. Once again, one of our members achieved victory—congratulations to Fiona Cooper on her exceptional and highly skilled work. Additionally, congratulations to Anita Marshall for earning second place with her outstanding piece. Thank you to Richard Shaw for giving us another wonderful photo opportunity on Race Day.</i></p> <p><i>Tracey Tau, as VP, and I attended the VRC FOTF launch to represent Millinery Australia. We took the chance to speak with VRC CEO Kylie Rogers, who requested that we get in touch with her in the new year to arrange a meeting to discuss Millinery. She said there is plans for an Autumn millinery competition so keep your ears open.</i></p> <p><i>We were once again invited by the VRC to the Government House Cup Eve Cocktail Party, The committee decided that these invites were to be given to the top 10 with plus one of their choice, and the committee with their plus one being a 2025 Millinery Australia volunteer. We</i></p>

Time	Item
	<p><i>also were offered 12 display spots on the Governors dining table. Members had a lovely time and showed off Australian Millinery at its finest.</i></p> <p><i>Members have participated in the Royal Shows held in Melbourne, Adelaide, Queensland, and New South Wales throughout the year. Establishing consistent reporting practices across the states would help us maximise benefits for members, be able to promote our successes and provide encouragement to participate.</i></p> <p><i>Our final event of the year will take place next Thursday, December 4th. We are honoured to host a private meeting with Mr Stephen Jones OBE, our patron. Mr Jones will join us from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm to answer questions in an interview style about millinery and followed by a Q&amp;A session. We will be displaying the Jonesy winners, and I ask that those members have their hats at the venue before 5:45pm</i></p> <p><i>We must provide final numbers to the Hyatt tomorrow. Unfortunately, ticket sales have been lower than anticipated, falling short of the responses we received from our recent Facebook poll. If you plan to attend, please purchase your ticket tonight or tomorrow. Your prompt response is appreciated.</i></p> <p><i>This year, I reached out to PayPal Fashion Festival to explore collaboration opportunities. As a result, we provided them with a look book featuring work from members interested in working with designers during the festival. Additionally, we are hosting workshops at the event with Catherine Storm, Rachael Hart, and Wendy Scully, and there is an exhibition in Geelong overseen by Sandy Forrester.</i></p> <p><i>We initially planned to hold a Fashion OFF the Field event; however, scheduling conflicts with multiple race meets led us to believe it would not achieve optimal success. As a result, we are now considering scheduling the event for the autumn season.</i></p> <p><i>Sandy, do you have any updates regarding the Geelong exhibition?</i></p> <p><i>[SF confirmed that everything is in place. Exhibition runs from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February @ the Geelong Library. SF will shortly post on our FB page for members who would like to participate in the exhibition, so keep an eye out for that].</i></p> <p><i>This year, members voted by a large majority to implement significant rule changes. We have introduced a "Friend" category, and if someone makes millinery, they are now welcome to join our association. The Fellow status skill requirements remain in place, and it is my hope that new milliners who have not yet acquired these advanced skills will be inspired and supported to develop them. This approach will help preserve the quality of millinery for the future and provide educational opportunities for both students and tutors. Although these rule changes have only recently taken effect, we already have eight Friends and two new milliner members. Please spread the word—if you meet a milliner or an enthusiast, encourage them to join. We are working on a simplified registration form for the website. As part of recent policy updates, Associates are now eligible to join our Facebook Members Group. We are introducing "Tutor Tuesdays" for class advertisements and "Supplier Saturdays" for promoting sales, products, and business hours. To advertise on these days, members must hold an associate or dual membership. We kindly request that other members refrain from posting general business on these days unless necessary. These initiatives are intended to provide mutual benefits for both associates and members. Jo Peterson has altered the FB setting so Associates can now join under their FB business page.</i></p> <p><i>Throughout the year the average attendance to our meetings was as follows: VIC 18, NSW 7, QLD 2.83, SA 1, WA .33, ACT .66, TAS 0, INTERNATIONAL .83.</i></p>

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	<p><i>Victoria currently leads the association with notably higher membership and engagement figures. It is important to remember we are a National Association. If you have suggestions for increasing membership numbers and engagement within your State, I will welcome the opportunity to discuss them, or you may email your ideas to the secretary for Committee review. There are numerous tasks that can be undertaken remotely, and your participation would be greatly appreciated.</i></p> <p><i>Preparations for 2026 are already underway, which will facilitate a smooth transition for the incoming committee, allowing prompt initiation of an action plan for our Mini Convention in Ballarat under the leadership of Rose Hudson. Planning for 2027 will also commence accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>As we now will appoint a new committee for 2026 It is crucial to note that the absence of a Secretary would necessitate closure within two weeks, and lacking a Treasurer would render operations unmanageable. Both roles can be fulfilled from any location within Australia, and outgoing members are committed to providing thorough handover processes, training, and ongoing support. Volunteering offers significant benefits, including fostering connections, promoting belonging, and contributing to an industry that provides meaningful rewards. We encourage you to consider joining the committee.</i></p> <p><i>I would like to wish Kathy Campbell, Sarah Mensforth and Serena Lindeman all the best and thank them once again for all their hard work and commitment to Millinery Australia.</i></p>
	<p><b>7. Incoming Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Committee positions were declared vacant, and nominations were accepted to fill positions for the 2026 Committee.</li> <li>• There were no nomination forms received during the open nomination period. 7 of the existing Committee members renominated in person during the meeting.</li> <li>• There were no Proxy Votes to be addressed or counted for any available positions.</li> <li>• Voting was conducted by a show of hands from those in attendance in person, and via Zoom.</li> </ul> <p><b>Confirmed 2026 Committee Members:</b></p> <p>President – Georgia Skelton  Vice-President – Tracey Tau  Secretary – NO NOMINATIONS – REMAINS VACANT  Treasurer - NO NOMINATIONS – REMAINS VACANT  Ordinary Committee Positions x 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jo Peterson</li> <li>• Julia Watson</li> <li>• Sandy Forrester</li> <li>• Joanne Cooke</li> <li>• Amber Louison-Suwal</li> <li>• Chantelle Westlake</li> </ul> <p>Members were reminded of the requirement of a Secretary in order to maintain the Association. The Association has 14 days from the date of the AGM to install a new Secretary.</p>

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	<p>In the event that a Secretary is not installed, and notified to CAV, then the Association is to be wound up and all funds held by the Association are to be distributed to a “body that has similar purposes to the Association’ (Rule 78(3)).</p> <p>Members were also reminded that without a Treasurer, the practical continued operation of the Association would cease.</p>
	<p><b>8. Meeting Open to Members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracey Tau discussed the proposed date for the 2026 Hat walk – 10<sup>th</sup> May. This is also Mother’s Day, so we may need to look at an alternate date or perhaps location, to avoid the events that would be on in Melbourne City (and other locations around Aus) on Mother’s Day. Committee will discuss and revert in the new year.</li> <li>Fiona Cooper confirmed that the Christmas Bauble Exchange names have been sorted, and she will be in contact imminently regarding recipient details.</li> </ul>
20:08	<b>9. Meeting Close</b>