Manna Gum Community House will again this year host an International Women's Day lunch on Wednesday March 8th at l pm.

Last year fifty or so local women had a delicious free lunch, and guest speakers provided food for thought while everyone enjoyed the friendly welcome Manna Gum always provides.

International Women's Day was founded after a turn of the 20th century protest by American women about their pay and working conditions led them to demonstrate in the streets of New York. This very unusual (in those times) event prompted women of other nations to speak up if their work was underpaid and undervalued.

International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality.

This year’s theme is #Embrace Equity which calls for the ongoing need across the globe for collective action to create a gender equal world - free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated.

Corner Inlet has much to celebrate in terms of the remarkable work done by many remarkable women who saw the need for infant welfare, kindergartens, hospitals, midwives, district nurses, care for the elderly, shelter and support during bush fires....the list goes on.

Corner Inlet women came together to raise funds so that these services could be established and the little towns -Welshpool, Toora, Fish Creek, Foster, Meeniyan would thrive. Often unacknowledged for their years of volunteer work they cooked, sewed, knitted, raffled, transported, catered for weddings, funerals, anything really. They skilfully organised events from debutant balls to feeding an entire race meeting while caring for their families as well.

Sarah Westwood will be guest speaker at the Manna Gum celebration. Sarah is a former social justice laywer who has worked with organisations such as the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia. She will talk about her experience working in the Kimberly and also about other exciting events to mark IWDay; a concert and a book launch of Celebrate Her (covered elsewhere in this publication). An exhibition of portraits of the South Gippsland women featured in Celebrate Her will be available to view at Manna Gum on the day.

Local artist Lisa Kennedy is also an invited guest and she will share one of her stories. Lisa is descendant of the coastal Pairebeenne/Trawlwoolway clan in North East Tasmania and finds her most meaningful work is to collaborate with Elders to visually express the often hidden voices of Ancestors and Country in a way that is accessible to many.

The event has been organised by Rebecca Matthews, manager of Manna Gum, Jen Young, Jo MacKenzie and Marge Arnup who will host the event.