

PERTAS LATVIEŠU ZINĀS



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Nr. 228

The Perth Latvian Newsletter

July/August 2025

CALENDAR

December

- 14 Church service 10:30 am
- 14 Daugavas Vanagu Christmas tree 1:00pm
- 21 Church service 10:30 am
- 24 Church service 6:00 pm

January

- 18 Church service 10:30 am

February

- 1 Church service 10:30 am
- 5 Daugavas Vanadzies sanāksme plkst. 11:00
- 15 Church service 10:30 am
- 22 Church service 10:30 am

December

- 1 Daugavas Vanadzies sanāksme plkst. 11:00
- 5 Daugavas Vanadzies sanāksme plkst. 11:00
- 15 Church service 10:30 am

PERKONĪTIS FOLK DANCING REHEARSALS

Tuesday evening at 6:00 pm

Latvija 100



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EDITOR

Please send items for publication to the editor by the 15th of February.

Thank you to everybody who donated to the publications of the Perth Latvian Newsletter. If you wish to donate, please make out your cheque to:

LATVIAN SPECIAL FUND

because Pertas Latvian Newsletter does not have a separate bank account.



EV. LUT. SV. PĀVILA DRAUDZE

Advent is HERE! For us Christians, it is a time of joy as we await the most significant event in the world – the birth of Jesus Christ.

Each of us has special memories and experiences, far more about Christmas itself than about Advent. Our worldly daily activities take up our time and energy – gifts, roasts, cakes, the Christmas tree, etc. On top of that, the children are on school holidays.

I remember the first “Christmas” we celebrated in Australia, with a church service in Northam – in an army barracks, next to a large, dry eucalyptus tree covered in tinsel – **our CHRISTMAS TREE!** The parents and grandparents sat there, bewildered in the 40°C heat, singing Latvian Christmas hymns about little fir trees! We children had fun jumping from one patch of shade to another, because the sunny ground was too hot for bare feet!

The festive tables stood with their legs placed in paraffin-filled containers so that the large ants (“bull ants”) wouldn’t climb onto the table. Outside in the gum trees the kookaburras “laughed,” and various lizards ran from us in all directions. How good the melting ice cream and the gifted sweets tasted! The children greatly enjoyed celebrating Christ’s birthday, but the adults experienced many different emotions.

One even asked, “Have we arrived at the gates of hell?” because the heat made it hard for him to breathe.

This year we will try to light the Advent candles to remind ourselves of the true meaning of the Festival, with prayers and thanksgiving that, in this faraway place, we can pray to God, praise Him, and celebrate Christ’s birth in our mother tongue.

- I enjoyed welcoming our 18 November guest of honour and speaker, Valda Liepiņa, and getting to know her. Her address was very interesting. Thanks to everyone who arranged transport and interviews so that our exile/diaspora stories will not be lost.
 - Let us remember and pray for the congregation members, friends, and family members who need God’s strength.
 - On behalf of the congregation, I extend
- FESTIVE GREETINGS TO ALL LATVIANS**

IN PERTH. May God sustain and protect us in the new year.

Ieva Vlahov
tālr. 044 719 4080

CHURCH SERVICES DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY

Date	14. december 10:30
Day	3. Advente
Colour	Zila vai Violeta
Readings	Jes 35:1-10 Jēkaba 5:7-11 Mat. Ev. 11:2-15
Hymns	3, 4, 7, 11, 181
Reader	Mācītājs
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	Sarmīte Vucēns

Aizlūgumi:

Harda Paparde	Andris Paparde
Inta Robinson	David Robinson
Aina Sprancis	Aina Timmermanis

Date	21. decembris 10:30
Day	4. Advente
Colour	Zila vai Violeta
Readings	Jes. 7:1-11 24 Psalms Mt. Ev. 1:18-25
Hymns	13, 15, 19, 21, 20
Reader	Mācītājs
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	Ruta Auziņš

Aizlūgumi:

Astrīda Untiņš	Daina Vārpiņš
Ieva Vlahov	Jānis Vucēns
Sarmīte Vucēns	Ruta Auziņš

Date	24. decembris 10:30
Day	ZIEMSVĒTKI
Colour	Balta
Readings	Jes 7:10-14 1 Jņ. 4:7-16 Mt. Ev. 1:18-25
Hymns	27, 30, 34, 36, 3 8
Reader	Mācītājs
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	Sarmīte Vucēns

Aizlūgumi:

Gunis Balodis	Signe Balodis
Mirdza Balodis	Ilgvars Bergmanis
Maiguta Bernšteins	Rita Džonsons

Date	18. janvāris 10:30 (Zoom no ziemeļiem)
Day	2 svētdiena pēc epifānijas
Colour	Balta
Readings	Jes. 49:1-7 1 Kor. 1:1-9 Jņ. Ev. 1:29-42a
Hymns	59, 65, 70, 182, 187
Reader	Ieva Vlahov
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	Rita Džonsons

Aizlūgumi:

Gunis Balodis Signe Balodis
Mirdza Balodis Ilgars Bergmanis
Maiguta Bernšteins Rita Džonsons
\

Date	1. februāris 10:30 (Zoom no ziemeļiem)
Day	4 svētdiena pēc epifānijas
Colour	Balta
Readings	15 Psalmi 1 Kor. 1:18-31 Mt. Ev. 5:1-12
Hymns	189, 190, 62, 64, 149
Reader	Sarmīte Vucēns
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	Ieva Vlahov

Aizlūgumi:

Austra Farras Līga Gemuts
Austra Grīnbergs Māra Hope
Austra Kaģis Juris Liepa
Ruta Liepa

Date	15. februāris 10:30 (Zoom no ziemeļiem)
Day	JĒZUS APSKAIDROŠANA
Colour	Balta
Readings	2 Mozus 24:8-18 2 Pēt. 1:16-21 Mt. Ev. 17:1-9
Hymns	250, 261, 186, 190, 196
Reader	Mācītājs
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	Ruta Auziņš

Aizlūgumi:

Zane Lewis Ben Lewis
Silvika Lūks Alan Lūks
Harda Paparde Andris Paparde

Date	22. februāris 10:30 (Zoom no ziemeļiem)
Day	PELNU DIENA
Colour	Melna
Readings	Joēla 2:12-19 2 Kor. 5:20b-6:10 Mt. Ev. 6:1-6,16-21
Hymns	73, 78, 80, 82
Reader	Mācītājs
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	-

Aizlūgumi:

Inta Robinson David Robinson
Aina Sprancis Aina Timmermanis
Astrīda Untiņš Daina Vārpiņš

Date	1 marts 10:30 (Zoom no ziemeļiem)
Day	2. Gavēnis
Colour	Violeta
Readings	1 Mozus 12:1-9 Rom. 4:1-8,13-17 Jņ. Ev. 3:1-17
Hymns	96, 97, 99, 101, 102
Reader	Ieva Vlahov
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	-

Aizlūgumi:

Inta Robinson David Robinson
Aina Sprancis Aina Timmermanis
Astrīda Untiņš Daina Vārpiņš

Date	15. marts 10:30 (Zoom no ziemeļiem)
Day	4. Gavēnis
Colour	Violeta
Readings	Jes. 42:14-21 Ef. 5:18-24 Jņ. Ev. 9:1-41
Hymns	73, 78, 80, 82
Reader	Sarmīte Vucēns
Duty	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	-

Aizlūgumi:

Ieva Vlahov Jānis Vucēns
Sarmīte Vucēns Ruta Auziņš
Gunis Balodis Signe Balodis

ABOUT THE MEANING OF LENT

Fasting should primarily be understood as preparation, not merely various forms of abstinence. It is a time in which we should place more emphasis on doing rather than simply refraining from doing something. Our daily life should become more filled with reflection on the message of Holy Scripture; we should set aside time to listen to God, time to evaluate our views and our life in the light of God's Word, and time to allow our faith to express itself in acts of love toward our neighbour.

This year we invite you to reflect with us on Christ's ministry on our behalf, which will be a blessed preparation for the Feast of the Resurrection.

Just as Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, Lent also lasts 40 days, not counting Sundays, beginning with Ash Wednesday. Sundays are not for fasting or mourning over our sinfulness, but for celebrating the victory of Christ's resurrection. For this reason, all the Sundays before Easter are sometimes called **Little Easters**.

May God bless this season for us through His Word and Sacrament.

Pastor Gunis Balodis
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DV PERTH BRANCH

PERTH DAUGAVAS VANADZES CELEBRATE THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

For their important birthday – the 75th anniversary of their existence – our *vanadzītes* had begun preparations early by sending invitations to their guests. The celebration was planned for the Perth Latvian community on Sunday, 29 October, at the usual time of 1:00 p.m. As I live quite a distance from the Perth Latvian Centre, I left home a bit earlier and arrived at our courtyard in good time.

Entering our DV club rooms, everything was set up and some guests had already arrived, welcomed by DV Perth chairman Pr. Ilmārs Rudaks with a glass of cocktail. The tables in the club room were set and decorated with napkins and lit candles, creating a festive atmosphere. The glasses on the tables already suggested that some kind of drink would be served; at the very least, one could predict that champagne would be offered, judging by the appropriate glasses.

For us, the feast usually caused some concern, especially when celebrating the Vanadzēs' anniversaries, because it was always the Vanadzēs who prepared the meals. But how could they celebrate their own special occasion if they themselves also had to provide a meal for the guests? This time the problem was solved by arranging for a chef and his assistant, which allowed the Vanadzēs to enjoy the meal and celebrate their important 75-year anniversary.

First, Ilmārs Rudaks greeted us with a short address and an overview of the beginnings of the Perth Vanadzēs, when several Latvian women saw the need to help the newly arrived legionnaires in Perth with tasks that were beyond their capabilities, forming a small women's support group to meet the needs of former legionnaires and soldiers. This group later developed into the Perth Vanadzēs, who throughout the years did great work, especially nurturing Latvian traditions and strengthening the continuation and development of these traditions within the Perth Latvian community and beyond. Here Ilmārs asked us to rise and observe a moment

of silence in memory of the many Vanadzēs who have passed away over the years.

Then Ilmārs invited the LAAJ vice-chairman in Perth, Jānis Vucēns, to say a few words. Jānis congratulated the Vanadzēs on the good and significant work they have done over all these 75 years – feeding us, and participating in choirs, theatre, children's school, sports, and other activities that maintained Latvian traditions and thus nurtured Latvian identity within the Perth Latvian community. It should be noted that Ilmārs, in DV general meetings, never forgot to thank the Vanadzēs for the great work they carried out also within the DV Perth chapter.

After Jānis Vucēns' speech, it was the turn of our long-time Vanadzēs leader, Rita Johnson. Ritiņa told us about the beginnings of the Vanadzēs as a women's group, and their later transition to the official title of the Perth Daugava Vanadzēs group, up until recent years when the Vanadzēs joined the DV Perth chapter. Ritiņa reminded us of the many Perth Vanadzēs leaders who guided the group for shorter or longer periods. Some who served for longer included Elvīra Špange, Elga Rodze-Ķīsele, Ruta Bērziņa, Anita Vaļikova, and others, but the current and longest-serving leader, for many years – 28 in total – was our own Rita Johnson. As the weight of years reduced the number of Vanadzēs, and age pressed on backs and eyesight, the group shrank, yet the work remained the same. Those who could still managed to come and help here at our Latvian House, our Centre. Only recently we celebrated one of our Vanadzēs reaching 101 years of age. So: years come and go, but the Perth Vanadzēs still come and feed us with Latvian dishes. Ritiņa especially thanked Anita Rudaka and Ilmārs Rudaks, who in recent times have been true "little elves" maintaining our Centre. Then Ritiņa invited us to sing the Vanadzēs' song, "*Daugav' abas malas*," which we performed well.

Next followed greetings from the Honorary Consul of Latvia, Imants Kīns, congratulating the Perth Vanadzēs on their 75th anniversary. The Honorary Consul thanked and acknowledged the great work the Vanadzēs had done over the years, and noted that through their diligence and energy they had accomplished much. Their work was closely connected with the Latvian traditions they upheld, nurturing Latvian identity within the Latvian community in Perth. The Honorary Consul wished the Perth Vanadzēs many more such celebrations and that the spirit of Latvian work may never fade.



Perth's Daugavas Vanadzies celebrate their 75th anniversary – photo I. Bernšteins

Ilmārs then introduced Anita, who recited one of her own poetic compositions, written especially for this celebration. Thank you, Anita. After Anita's poem, Ilmārs asked us to stand and, with a glass of champagne, toast the Perth Vanadzies: "High fortune and joy – Long live! Long live! Long live!"

Then Imants read greetings sent by DVA Vanadzies leader Astra Kronīte, who congratulated our Vanadzies on their great anniversary and thanked them for the tremendous work they have done over the years, wishing them much vitality and strength for many celebrations to come. She reminded our Vanadzies of the well-known verse so fitting for them today: "*Small was father's homeland, but greatly it stood.*" You are all Vanadzies and also members of the Perth Latvian community, and with your talents you have sung in choirs, acted in theatre, participated in sports, and more – thereby building and strengthening the Perth Latvian community. Thus, you have been a very important part of the Perth Latvian community. I wish you the same successful future in the years ahead.

After the greetings and speeches the official part ended, and the meal could begin. The chef's assistant first served us a delicious bowl of soup, and afterwards we went to receive a plate of tasty

lunch from the chef. And that was not all – later we could enjoy coffee and cakes, and Anita had once again managed to bake the well-known and beloved traditional Latvian birthday *kliņģeris*. Thank you again, Anita. We sat for a long time, chatting with friends and guests. It was a joy to see our Vanadzies at the tables and to know that this time they did not have to work in the kitchen and later clean up, but could sit with us and enjoy the celebration without worrying about chores.

Thank you for the celebration, thank you for a lovely Sunday afternoon, and we wish the Perth Vanadzies many more fruitful and successful years ahead. **Thank you!!**

IELŪGUMS - INVITATION

2025 DAUGAVAS VANAGU ZIEMASSVĒTKU EGLĪTE

(Christmas celebrations)

Svētdien 14. decembrī - plkst. 13:00



Lūdzu neaizmirstiet

Please don't forget to bring

❖ letītu davānu (\$10) vecīša maisam

Wrapped gift for each person attending to the value of \$10 for Santa's sack

❖ Grozīnu

Plate to share for a light lunch

❖ Pantiņu, dzeju, dziesmu, stāstu vai joku ziemassvētku vecītim

Poem, song, story or joke for Santa's entertainment in either Latvian or English

Refreshements will be provided

Ziemassvētku vecītis jūs gaida!

PLEASE RSVP YOUR ATTENDANCE by

Thursday 11 December

Anita – 0403878057 or ilanroo@bigpond.com



REPUBLIC OF LATVIJA HONORARY CONSUL IN WESTERN AUSTRALIAS CELEBRATIONS of the 107th ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

I always look forward to the month of November. There will be two reasons to attend the Latvian Centre- There will be firstly a visitor during November from Latvia, our Latvian Ambassador to Australia will be here, the Latvian community will celebrate on 18 the November and it's our daughter Maija's birthday on 18 November.

8th of NOVEMBER

On 8th November at 13.00 at the Latvian Centre we had a wonderful event to celebrate Latvia's 107th anniversary of Independence.

The newly refurbished Daugavs Vanagi club was full of attendees, and we could show it off to our two honoured guests: Our newly appointed Ambassador Samija Serifa and Valda Liepina the chairperson of the Occupation Museum in Riga.



LR Ambassador to Australia Samija Šerif – foto SL

Janis Vucens the vice president of LAAJ in Perth welcomed everyone to the event and thanked the Daugavs Vanagi for providing the venue.

It was with great joy and pride I introduced Samija Serifa who was appointed on 18 September 2025. She has been very active in her few months meeting Latvian communities around Australia as well as undertaking her duties in Canberra. Samija began her career in 2007 in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and has been posted to embassies in Türkiye and Egypt. She has been a director of departments within the MFA. She has a degree in Middle East politics and culture from London University and speaks four languages- Latvian, English, Arabic and Russian.

Samija said it was a pleasure to be in Perth, how important the diaspora is in nourishing the development of Latvia and to never forget the sacrifices that have been made in securing Latvia's independence.



Valda Liepina speaking to Perth's Latvians – photo SL

Janis Vucens introduced Valda Liepina Chair of the occupation museum who would give the Independence Day talk. It was so appropriate for Valda to be presenting the talk during Patriots Month as she is a true patriot! Born in Melbourne, active in the Latvian community, founded with Anita Anderson the Australian branch of the Popular Front and moved to Latvia in 1999. She has

worked with the EU and in Luxembourg and in 2024 elected chair of the occupation museum in Riga that is an unpaid position. It's interesting that the occupation museum was set up in Riga by the Latvian diaspora organisations in 1992.

Valda's talk was focused on the vital importance of the Latvian diaspora to the development of Latvia.

Quoting from her talk:

The Latvian diaspora plays a significant and versatile role in preserving our national and political identity, strengthening the economy, protecting political security and being representatives of Latvia on the international stage. The heritage of the Latvian people continues to live abroad.

She spoke about the privilege we have here in Australia to have dual citizenship thanks to both Latvian and Australian governments. We can vote in both countries and in Latvia where voting is optional it is so important for diaspora with citizenship to vote in Latvian elections. Latvian citizenship makes us citizens of the 27 country EU.

Valda reminds us that the return to Independence by the parliament's declaration on 4 May 1990 was challenged by Russian forces' attacks in Riga where barricades were set up in old Riga and Latvian defenders were killed. It took till 21 August 1991 for our independence to be officially recognised by the world. A day to be remembered and celebrated.

Quoting Valda:

Today, 35 years after renewed independence, almost as many people of Latvian origin live outside Latvia as within it. This means that the diaspora is not just a reflection of Latvia's past — it is part of Latvia's living present and future, in which they have the opportunity to participate and have a say.

In an era of Russian aggression and disinformation, Latvia's security depends not only on NATO, the EU, or the United States, but also on people speaking out for the truth. Diaspora Latvians help refute false narratives, stand up for Ukraine, and remind the world why Latvia's independence matters. When the diaspora is loud and united, Latvia is less isolated, more visible, stronger and harder to silence.

Many of us will recall that the relationship between Latvia and its diaspora has been challenging.

Valda noted the turning point. Quoting from her talk:

*A major turning point in the relations of the Latvian state with the diaspora was the Diaspora Law adopted on November 1, 2018. In the development of this law, the main so-called "locomotives" were, in a way, **the European Latvian Association which now has the largest diaspora** and the World Federation of Free Latvians. This is an example of how the diaspora is also able to influence the directions of Latvian legislation.*

The Latvian Diaspora Law recognises that the Latvia does not end at its borders. It confirms that every Latvian — no matter where they live — is part of our nation. This law is both practical and symbolic: it helps those who want to return, supports our schools and culture abroad, and gives the diaspora a voice in the future of Latvia. Our being here together today, celebrating our Latvia, is part of the support this law affords us. Thanks to this law, every year we receive more support — financial and moral — from Latvia, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other institutions. And every year the dialogue between Latvians abroad and Latvian institutions becomes more significant and influential. In fact, the Latvian diaspora's unique role is ever more appreciated in Latvia.

Valda reminded us all that Latvia continues to be under threat.

Quoting from her talk:

At the beginning of last year, a Molotov cocktail was thrown into the office of the director of the Latvian Occupation Museum (the court verdict has just been issued). At least once a month, a window is broken in the KGB former headquarters that is now a branch of the Occupation Museum—Employees of the KGB House have been called on a private number, threatening to take them to Siberia. Our posts regularly have hundreds of troll and bot comments that need to be weeded out. Of course, all this only shows that the Occupation Museum is brilliantly fulfilling its mission!

It's one thing to speak out about issues but we must always come with action plans on making things better. Valda did just that at the end of her talk:

WHAT CAN WE DO?

What can the diaspora do? Some suggestions (there are more, but too many to include here)

- *Learn to recognise the subtleties in language and half-truths and know how to refute them.*

- *Teach friends and family how to check sources, recognize bots, and avoid emotional manipulation. Organise workshops.*
- *Latvians in the diaspora can express their opinions – in local media, online discussions, schools and community events – to dispel myths and share facts about Latvia, Russia, NATO and Ukraine. (For this purpose, the Strategic Communications Department of the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is compiling current and important information in short Information Pages for our use.)*
- *The message is stronger when it comes from ordinary citizens, not governments. And in writing letters, not by sending e-mails.*
- *Identify and support and share verified Latvian and European sources, such as LSM.lv, Delfi Faktiskā, Re:Baltica and EUvsDisinfo.*
- *Seek out alliances with like-minded groups – for example, Baltic alliances, strengthen contacts with Ukrainians, Finns and others.*
- *Russian disinformation seeks to divide allies and drain support for Ukraine. We have access to real stories from the front. By sharing these and reminding others of the history of Latvia's occupation and liberation, the diaspora helps maintain international unity against aggression.*
- *Follow and engage with Latvian-language media, podcasts, and the work of cultural creators.*
- *Inform embassies if we recognise series of articles written by propaganda journalists or a so-called convenient idiot.*

I will leave you with this final quote from Valda's superb talk:

Today, as we mark the 107th anniversary of the Republic of Latvia, we can be proud of our heritage, our history, our achievements and also of the contribution we have made to Australia and be grateful for her support to our parents and grandparents who were welcomed into this country.

Latvia regained its freedom thanks to unity — people in Latvia and people abroad worked together. This partnership is still necessary: to maintain democracy, to build a Latvia where we want to return and live and be proud of, to inspire Latvians to believe that a free and independent state is a value — it cannot be taken for granted. To protect it, we must continue to work, learn, be vigilant — and love the country of our ancestors!

There was a break and then Valda gave her very well researched talk in English on “how Whitlam

betrayed Australian Balts in 1974.” Valda's talk showed how powerful the diaspora is when united, as the de jure recognition of Latvia's incorporation into the Soviet Union was cancelled by the Malcolm Frazer Coalition Government 17 months later.

Janis Vucens ended the talks with thanks to everyone involved. With everyone so stimulated by Valda's talks no one wanted to go home and it was a few hours later that the DV club was empty. Thank you to DV for the food and drinks.

18th of NOVEMBER

It's 7.00 am on 18 November 2025. It's a cool morning that is energised by the warm hearts of those attending the raising of the two Latvian flags at the Latvian Centre. Dievs Svētī Latviju rings out across the car park and the Australians passing by look over at us. We sing happy birthday to 3 years old George as it's his birthday as well.

At 6.00 pm around 50 people gather at the Latvian Centre for the atceres akts. Attending are the Honorary Consul of Estonia Anu Van Hattam, George Sekula Belmont Council councillor and Wally Perzylo, President of the Ukrainian Association of WA. Janis Vucens Vice President of the LAAJ welcomes everyone and notes today is a joyous day. I must say everyone attending brought with them a joy and respect for all the Latvians who have fought for Latvia's independence.



Th Baltic Honorary Consuls and Jānis Vucēns – photo SL

The Latvian and Australian flags were brought into the hall and Ivonna Danbergs the newly elected Chair of the Latvian Association of WA provided the opening dedication of for the evening. Eva Vlahov president of the Latvian Lutheran community led everyone in hymns, bible readings and the Lords prayer.

Ilmars Rudaks President of the Perth Daugavas Vanagi opened the proceedings and introduced the Perkonitis with foot tapping and lively folk dances.



Pērkonītis – foto SL

Janis Vucens read out the greetings to the Perth Latvian community from Anita Anderson President of the LAAJ. She called on us all to support Latvia in these unstable and challenging times in Europe. The diaspora has power and can do what they can to guarantee Latvia's future as democratic and independent nation. This follows on from the talk by Valda Liepina's excellent talk on the importance of the diaspora on 8 November in the Latvian Centre.

Janis Vucens on behalf of the LAAJ, handed to Indulis Bernsteins the LAAJ award for excellent work Indulis is doing for the Latvian community in Perth. Congratulations Induli!



*Indulis Bernšteins presented with the LAAJ Award
– photo SL*

We watched the President of Latvia's Edgars Rinkevics talk to all Latvians commemorating the

107th anniversary of Latvia's independence on 18 November 1918.

I as the the Honorary Consul of Latvia welcomed everyone on behalf of the newly appointed Latvian Ambassador of Latvia to Australia Samija Serifa. I called on Latvian citizens to make sure they voted in next year's national elections.

I introduced Janis Vucens to give the main talk that was entitled "Defiance." Janis is one of the people who is the glue of our Latvian community here in Perth.

It was an engaging, well researched and powerful talk that reminded us all of the strength and resilience of Latvia over its history. Great talk Jani!

We all stood and sang with gusto and pride the Latvian anthem Dievs Sveti Latviju. Perkonitis came and again made us all smile and clap along as they danced.

We stood as the two flags were taken out and Janis Vucens thanked all the people that had made tonight's event such a wonderful success. Ilmārs called out and thank you Janis!

Yes November at the Latvian Centre is worth looking forward to!

Imants Kins

Honoray Consul of Latvia for Western Australia.

+61401 034 541

PERKONĪTIS

Everyone is invited to join in the fun!
Learn to polka, skipo and hop. Leaarn new folk dances.

Rehearsals every Tuesday at 6:30pm

Contact Dainu Jefimovs, to get further information.
DMs or d.jefimovs@hotmail.com

LIDIJA DOMBROVSKA LARSEN (1925-2025)



The first time I met Lidija was on her 100th birthday at her aged care facility. I was excited to meet her. In walking into the facility I could see the entry decked out with colourful *happy 100th birthday Lidija* signs, balloons and streamers. The carers here were welcoming and joyful.

The spirits were very friendly here! Lidija's room was full of birthday decorations and a large Latvian flag. Nora and her daughter Belina were there and her GP doctor joined us at one point.

I had with me the letter from the President of Latvia Edgars Rinkēvičs congratulating Lidija on her 100th birthday. I held her hand and read it out to her. Her eyes were focused on me and watered up as I was reading the letter. Nora said later that Lidija was overwhelmed by the President's acknowledgement of her and my attendance. Lidija, while aware of everything happening around her, was able to make sounds but on unable to speak.

I was invited a week later to Lidija's home where Nora and her daughter lived to be with her friends and neighbour's to listen to Nora speak about Lidija's extraordinary life. I also saw many of her paintings and numerous books of fiction and poetry she had written. It was not long after her 100th birthday that Lidija passed on to the next mysterious part of her journey.

Lidija born in Riga in 1925 and having from 1943 lived in Denmark, Sweden France and Australia from 1983 was always a Latvian patriot. Lidija is a world known painter writer and poet. She followed the Der Blaue Reiter (Blue Rider) group in Germany that included Kandinsky. There is an art gallery in Munich with an extensive collection of the Der Blaue Reiter. Andra and I have visited the gallery and it remains one of the most engaging and memorable experiences of my life. I had read his book, "Concerning the spiritual in art". In this gallery you can follow in chronological order Kandinsky's life through his colourful and abstract art work. Lidija's favourite colour is blue. Lidija associated with world famous 20th century painters

like Leger and expressionists like Marc Chagall as you can read about in the article written in the Western Australian newspaper in October 2010.

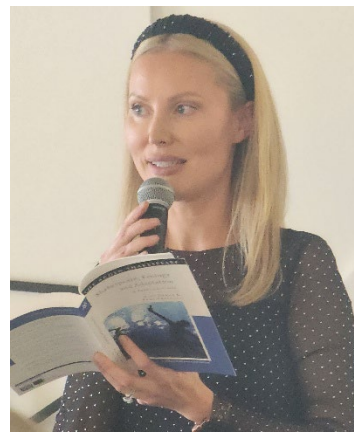
I attended the funeral of Lidija on Friday 31 October 2025 in Fremantle. Nora and her daughter Belina wore a crown of flowers (vainags) and Lidija's coffin had three flags on it- Denmark, Australia and Latvia. Nora was dressed in Latvia's colours- sarkans balts sarkans. The Latvian anthem was played prior to Nora reading the obituary. Nora and I sang.

Nora read out her poetic and heart warming obituary to her mother Lidija. See the link . A montage of photographs of Lidija and her family followed on the two large screens.

I salute Lidija Dombrovskā Larsen, world renowned Latvian artist who lived in Perth for 43 years- the longest part of her 100 years on this earth.

Imants Kīns

BOOK LAUNCH – DR ALYS DAROY



On Wednesday, 26th of November, at Murdoch University, Dr Alys Daroy launched her two new books – "Sydney's Food Landscape" (together with Joshua Zeunet) and "Shakespeare, Ecology and Adaptation" (together with Paul Prescott).

Alys is a classical actor, theatre maker and Academic Chair of Theatre and Creative Production and Lecturer in English and Theatre at Murdoch University in Western Australia

After the book launch, Alys has begun preparing for the Australian Latvian 60th Culture Festival choir concert and dancing in the folk dancing concert as a member of Perth's Pērkonītis.