

June 19th to 25th 2011 Refugee Week in Australia

Refugee Week in Ballarat

Saturday June 18

Kaleidoscope See Page 7

Monday June 20

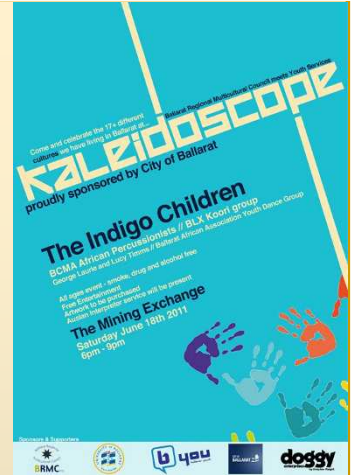
Multicultural Youth Sports Night
See Page 6

Tuesday June 21

Interfaith Service See Page 9

Thursday June 23

Forum on Refugee Policy in Australia
See Page 6



We have chosen to take asylum seekers, so let's attend to the job, rather than the sad political game. Under the Refugee Convention, people are not acting illegally by coming to Australia and asking for asylum. We should face up to our obligations, including to those asylum seekers who land on our doorstep.

Mike Steketee, The Australian December 2010



Next BRMC General Members Meeting 21 June 2011 7.00 pm

BRMC Executive Committee

Chairperson: Frank Williams

Deputy Chair: Sulaika Dhanapala

Secretary: Pam Anderson

Asst. Secretary: Carmel Kavanagh

Treasurer: Lisa Howlett

Interfaith Officer: Fr. Gerald Loos

Publicity Officer: Gwendoline Blake

Women's Officer: Georgina Vagg

Youth Officer: Lucien Assogba

Community Representatives:

Ugo Vito Lolacono

Khushi Maharaj

David Vendy

Co-opted Members:

Tracey Steiner

John Werts

Staff

Executive Officer: Dr Jeff Langdon

Admin Trainee.: Vacant

Finance Coordinator: Regina Bautista

Volunteer Coordinator.: Nenita Drough

HACC Team Leader: Jason Shorter

HACC Support: Shammika Fernando

MCT Food Coordinator: Gayle Roberts

CPP Coordinator: Kim Romeo

Telelink/ SSG Coord: Virgie Hocking

Migrant English Program: Judy Brumby

Contact BRMC

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GPlace Cnr. Dunn & English Street
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Chairperson's Report

Welcome to our third great Newsletter on behalf of the Executive Committee of BRMC. We have again been extremely busy with a variety of events and activity plus in the development of policy documents for BRMC as we move forward with our progress in 2011.

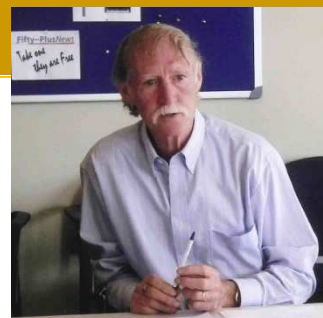
The EO has done a great job in completing the draft Strategic Plan and the new Policies and Procedures Manual for BRMC. These documents will be central to all our operation over the next three years.

Congratulation to all staff members for organising a lovely luncheon and excellent function to recognise our invaluable volunteers at The Barkly recently. Congratulations too to both the Ballarat Interfaith Network and the Circle of Friends for their respective recent activities that were both very well organised and attended. I am also delighted to advise our members that we were successful with our joint submission for a major Heritage Award on behalf of GPlace for the Creative Reuse of a Heritage Place; namely the refurbishment of the Golden Point Primary School.

Next we focus our attention on Refugee Week activities and we have great a array of activities organised including a Youth Multicultural Concert a Sport Event and BBQ, an Ecumenical Church Service and a Forum on Refugees BRMC has also recently been directly involved with another very successful Multicultural Sports Day as the Victoria Bowling Club. Plus, as a result of another terrific International Women's Day Celebration, we presented a cheque to Ballarat Hospice Care to purchase an Oxygen Concentrator which will be invaluable to their needy client's palliative care.

Thus, to the Executive Committee, our hard working EO and staff, volunteers and all of our Cultural Associations along with many active Committee Groups, congratulations and best wishes to all..

Frank Williams Chairperson BRMC



Executive Officer's Report

Refugee Week commences on June 18th this year and we at BRMC are promoting a number of events in conjunction with other agencies. This issue of the BRMC Newsletter (out a bit earlier than normal) features refugee issues and profiles. I would particularly recommend you the Forum at BRMC on Thursday 23rd June.

As we approach the end of the financial year it's appropriate to mention the stress that BRMC has been under this past year. With the loss of two programs (the Settlement Grants Program and the Voluntary Tutors Program, both funded by the Federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship) and some other extraordinary costs, this year has seen the organisation having to reduce its administrative staffing in order to remain viable. We have been fortunate to have the assistance of some great volun-

teers to fill some of the gaps (for instance see Nicole's and Naizell's stories on the back page). So it is with a sad heart (for us but glad for her) that we say goodbye to Regina Bautista as our part time (4 days per week) Administrative Coordinator. We are fortunate that Regina is going to another part time job at Highlands LLEN and is still available to us one day per week! Her new title will be Finances Coordinator. We are seeking to employ a Trainee Administrative Assistant to assist with the administrative functions of the organisation. Nenita Drough continues as Volunteers Coordinator for one day per week. We would encourage anyone with time available to help out to see me or Nenita.



Jeff Langdon Executive Officer

Meet Shammika Fernando

I'm Shammika and I'm from Sri Lanka. I came to Australia in year 2007 as a student. I finished my Bachelor in Psychological Science last year and had my graduation recently. I studied at the University of Ballarat. I'm married, and I live in Ballarat with my lovely wife Nadeesha who is also Sri Lankan.

With my previous work involvements, I had the opportunity to travel a bit and see places and experience different cultures. Thus, coming to Australia wasn't a major cultural shock for me. The only surprise was the Australian slang and the way common terms are shortened. Having visited a few different countries before, I have to say that Australia is one of the best I've seen so far. I've met and made friends with people that are far nicer than anyone I've ever met. They are so wonderful that my impression about Australia and its people will be positive for a long time, if not forever. Added to that, my experience at the University of Ballarat has been an absolute treat. My life in Ballarat is good. Of course there are certain challenges living in a regional town like Ballarat, but life itself is a challenge, so, Ballarat is the place for me and its friendly people are the ones to be with.

Recently I started working for BRMC. I've been a volunteer for BRMC before and now I'm so glad to be a part of it as someone with more responsibilities and involvement and of course it's always nice to get paid for doing what I love. Community and Social work is my passion. I've been volunteering for many different organisations in different capacities ever since I was a school boy, which is many years ago. My recent involvement with the Home and Community Care Program and Multicultural Tucker at BRMC made me fall in love more with my current work. The wonderful people, young and aged, mostly aged, made me look forward to the next event to experience their warm and welcoming company. It makes me feel good about myself to be involved with such people and organisations and to give something back to the community as a volunteer or as a paid worker. I'm happy to be where I am today.

Shammika Fernando HACC Support Worker



Program Reports

BRMC Home and Community Program

BRMC's HACC program continues to provide excellent services to the older culturally diverse community of Ballarat.

Our Multicultural Tucker program continues to cater to the greatest number of clients. In April we had 96 clients attend the Australian meal and then in May 78 clients attended. Whilst numbers may have been lower this month, the trend is of numbers increasing. No doubt people are drawn in by the excellent food prepared by our volunteer team headed by Gayle Roberts our Food Coordinator. Not to mention the friendly atmosphere where people of many different language groups have a chance to socialise and enjoy the company of their peers.

The Tucker is also becoming a richer event. Last month, NESBlinks had their menu published in the MCT newsletter, along with details about the cultural origins of the food they make. This helps to ensure that our guests have a deeper appreciation for our local cultural groups and makes it more than just another lunch program. We are beginning to get more groups engaged in decorating the hall for the event to enliven the atmosphere. We also wish to encourage guests to have a more active role in the event; we have invited them to bring along photos to share at the next Tucker. We hope that ongoing initiatives like this will encourage guests to feel that they play an important role in making the Tucker a vibrant and rich event. We like to think that our guests are more than recipients; rather they are participants.

As a team we feel very proud of the work we did to help run the Multicultural Sports day on Tuesday May 24th. Together with Jill Spicer from Centacare and Paul Owen from Sports Central we ran the day for 32 guests. All had a great time as can be clearly seen in our hula hooping event as pictured above!

Jason Shorter HACC Team Leader



Community Partners Program

In April, Ballarat CPP collaborated with the Australian Croatian Community Services and the Australian Multicultural Community Services to offer a free Diabetes Information Session. Participants had the opportunity to learn how to prevent and live with diabetes by making healthy life choices.

Following this in May, we held a Dementia Awareness Information Session which was presented by Mr Tom Valenta. In a relaxed atmosphere participants were able to listen and share experiences they have encountered with Alzheimer's and, most importantly, were able to have all their questions answered. Tom has collected a group of personal stories about Alzheimer's and put them together in a book titled 'Remember me, Mrs. V?' All proceeds go directly to Alzheimer's Australia.

Delivering cultural briefings to Ballarat service providers is a great opportunity to heighten the awareness of the specific needs of our Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. It is essential for service providers to understand a person's culture, values and beliefs to ensure their service meets the relevant and appropriate needs of their clients. It is great to see our community services responding to the needs of our cultural communities by engaging in the cultural briefings CPP has to offer. I would like to thank ACAS (Aged Care Assessment Service) and the Nursing students at SMB and Mt Helen campuses for working with BRMC and participating in cultural briefings.

Please remember that the first Friday of every month is the CPP 'Coming Together' meeting at Formosa Nursery where Aged Care Health Service Providers are invited to meet the cultural facilitators of the CPP.

If you would like BRMC to organise an information session on a particular health topic or would like your organisation to experience a cultural briefing please contact me on 5332 5941 or email cpp@brmc.org.au

Kim Romeo CPP Coordinator

Migrant English Classes

The Friday Conversation class 1pm to 3pm, is providing a great service for a number of our migrants. Frank Williams, Pam McKean and Dawn Manning are continuing to provide an excellent and popular class with individual help where appropriate.

Workplace Communication class on Thursdays 5pm – 6.30pm. Judy is tutoring this class with the assistance of other tutors, Paula Castro, a tutor of some 4 years, and Michael Nash and David Myers, who have recently joined the program. This arrangement enables provision of individual assistance where needed. Although the clients (mostly Maths/IT researchers at UB) are fairly fluent in English, there is considerable need for general and workplace communication which we are addressing.

Reading & Writing Class: If there is enough interest this class, conducted by Bernard Bradbury and which was so popular in the past may be recommenced. Bernard has returned to BRMC and would like to resume with this if possible.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS/HOME TUTORS: Home tutors are providing help according to need, including preparation for IELTS tests, preparation for citizenship test, and general English/settlement needs.

Judy Brumby Coordinator, Migrant English Program.



The GPlace Crew holding proudly their certificate as winners of the Creative Reuse of a Heritage Place Award.

Program Reports

Social Support Program

The Hepburn/ Moorabool Multicultural luncheon at the Boat House Café in Daylesford held on the 2nd of March 2011 went very well. The clients from Hepburn and the Moorabool Shire were looking forward to catching up with each other again. They mingled with each other very well and enjoyed the storytelling, trivia quiz and footy tipping. They were also very interested to hear from the guest speaker Anna Yateman from Ballan Health Centre who talked about falls prevention. There were a number of interactions during the talk.

The next event was held on the 1st of June at the Gordon Pub. A guest speaker from CFA and a musician was organised.

The Friendly Visiting Scheme, a number of referrals were received from service providers such as the City of Ballarat HACC program whose clients are from Italian, Dutch, Finnish and Croatian descent. A number of inquiries were also received from interested people who wanted to become a volunteer visitor.

Unfortunately we had lost another Filipino client from the friendly visiting scheme that recently passed away last March. The numbers of volunteer visitors are increasing. We have now new Finnish volunteer who is visiting a Finnish client in Creswick.

We also received a referral from the City of Ballarat for a previous Croatian client

whose family requested to have the volunteer to visit again.

To make the program more effective, fun and exciting, the coordinators try to match the client and the volunteer not just by their culture but with the same interest and skills. We have a Filipino volunteer visitor who is visiting a Dutch client and Dutch volunteer who is visiting Italian clients. Both visits are doing well and are getting along very well.

The Filipino Telelink continues and been having a great time. Every fortnight they have different interesting topics such as health issues and how to become more positive about you.

At the moment it has been a challenge to get the Dutch and the Intercultural Telelink group running as the coordinator is also heavily involved in supporting other programs such as the Multicultural Tucker, the Men's Sport and the Social Support bus trip. The coordinator continues to network with other service providers in attending the Volunteers network meeting regularly.

In April, the coordinator took her annual leave for four weeks, for her mission work. Her and her husband Lawrie visited their sponsored children in San Carlos Negros Occidental and Kalibo Aklan Panay Island Philippines and assisted in general duties such as helping the staff in the feeding program for the underprivileged children. They travelled to three islands to do mis-

sionary work.

The coordinator's role and responsibility in BRMC is to provide social support to people from diverse cultures that are aged or have disabilities to help minimize the isolation and improve the wellbeing.

Philippines trip

Whilst I was on annual leave in the Philippines I continued to work with underprivileged children who don't have the opportunity to see and enjoy places.

We visited our four sponsored children in two different islands. We took them shopping for food and clothing. We took them to places where they would never have the opportunity to go as the family are financially disadvantaged.

We joined the family camp of the Compassion children and participated in some of the activities such as learning new action praise and worship songs. I was also a guest speaker for the Compassion mothers and talked about the role of a mother in times of crisis.

On my last day of annual leave, I and my husband were among the invited guests at the opening of the San Carlos Multifunction Centre where their mission project helped construct the building.

Virgie Hocking



Virgie at work at the mission in the Philippines

The Hepburn/Moorabool Multicultural program is a social support program for people from diverse cultural background who are aged, have disability and are socially, culturally and isolated. The program is targeted to people who are living in the Hepburn and Moorabool region who are geographically isolated and missed out the activities run in Ballarat due to the distance and availability of the transport. Recently we had our last event for this financial year at the Gordon Hotel where everyone

Everyone had a great time and enjoyed the trip to Gordon Hotel. Everyone always look forward to catch up with each other, happy to mingle and talk in a relaxed informal way.

The activity is not just a luncheon but also getting everyone involved. We started with the jokes and the storytelling that Peter Fulton (Moorabool Staff) read to them. It was followed by a footy tipping where everyone favourably enjoyed the activity. John Speed another staff from Moorabool Shire did a great job in facilitating the activity.



Recent Activities

Volunteers Week Celebration

The Volunteers' Appreciation Luncheon held on the 4th of May was attended by 29 volunteers, the staff and Frank, BRMC Chairman and a volunteer himself. Due to work and other commitments, quite a number of our volunteers could not attend the luncheon.

Jeff Langdon, our Executive Officer, welcomed everyone present and thanked our volunteers for their commitment and dedication in giving their time, effort and skills in meeting the needs of our multicultural community..

After the main course was served, Frank gave a short address acknowledging our volunteers' support. Frank expressed in his talk that we wouldn't be very effective in what we do at BRMC without the hard work of all our volunteers. He highlighted the value and importance of their contribution

A Certificate of Appreciation was then presented by the Coordinators of each program. The certificates for those not present were mailed and/or handed personally by the respective coordinators. During tea and coffee, five of our volunteers from each program shared what it means to be a volunteer at BRMC. They expressed their joy, blessings and benefits as they come each time to help and share in the work we do for our clients. They are very appreciative also of the staff assistance to them in the work that they do.

It was a great afternoon enjoyed by everyone. It was a good op-

portunity for our volunteers and staff to catch up with one another, enjoy good food and especially for our volunteers, to be given the recognition and appreciation they deserve. Let us all continue to work together because there is a great need out there amongst the community we serve.

For this month's MCT, volunteers from the Filipino/Australian Association of Ballarat will be on hand to assist in the preparation of Filipino Cuisine. We thank you all for your willingness to share your culture, time and talent to others.

We also would like to congratulate Nicole Loverso in her new job working in Administration with a Law Firm in Ballarat. According to Nicole this is her dream job and she is very thankful for the experience and support extended to her doing volunteer work in Admin. We wish you all the best. Nicole and thank you very much.

We welcome Julietta and Troy, our new volunteers helping in Admin and Reception. We appreciate your assistance and support. May your time with us be enjoyable and meaningful for you too. Annie Hammerton's valuable help in admin/reception is truly appreciated by us too;

Thank you again everyone for your help; people are developing and learning; are being emotionally, mentally and physically encouraged and are feeling loved, valued, accepted and have a sense of belonging.

Neenita Drough, Volunteer Liaison Coordinator



Some of the action at the Volunteers Lunch

BRMC supports Ballarat Hospice

On the 19th May 2011 BRMC presented a cheque to Ms. Carita Potts, EO of Ballarat Hospice Care Inc. Ms. Georgina Vagg, Women's Officer/Fundraising Coordinator of BRMC said she was delighted to present the cheque for \$1,100 to Hospice. This was in addition to the sum of \$228.5 that was raised on the night of the International Women's Day Annual Dinner, from donations and sponsorship.

Ms. Potts stated that she was especially thankful to receive such tremendous support from BRMC and the funds would be used to purchase an Oxygen Concentrator (total cost \$1500) for the use of clients who suffer from cancer to relieve their respiratory distress.

Ms. Vagg also highlighted that last year BRMC supported Ms. Moira Kelly and the Children's First Foundation to assist children from overseas that have severe medical and physical problems.

Ms. Potts stressed that Ballarat Hospice assists people with incurable illnesses and focuses on keeping people comfortable during their terminal illness and aims to enhance their quality of life and symptom management, that's acceptable to the client.

Hospice currently is assisting some 70 palliative care clients and their families and has 20 dedicated staff, plus some 90 volunteers from throughout the Central Highlands Region

Ms. Potts thanked members and supporters associated with BRMC and VMC including Ms. Vagg, Chairperson Frank Williams, Executive Officer Jeff Langdon and everyone who had helped raise the \$1,100 including sponsors and participants at the IWD event, on behalf of the Ballarat Hospice Care.





REFUGEE WEEK FORUM

ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES The Policies, the Programs and the People



THURSDAY, JUNE 23rd – 5:30 pm BRMC, G PLACE

This is an informal early evening get together to allow participants to hear from the Dept. of Immigration and Citizenship about the current Government policies on refugees and asylum seekers. We also have a representative from Red Cross which is contracted by the Government to provide a number of asylum seekers programs. Guest Speakers are **Jose Alvaraz** State Director for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. And from the Red Cross we have **Kim-Louise van den Nouwelant** Team Leader of the Community Detention Program. We also will have local refugees present to talk about their experiences.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

Hear the issues; get the facts direct from the Source!

It will be between 5:30 to 7:00 pm, Thursday, 23rd of June

There will be refreshments available after the meeting.

REFUGEE WEEK

MULTICULTURAL SPORTS NIGHT

MONDAY, JUNE 20 – 5:30 pm BALLARAT GRAMMAR SCHOOL

As part of the Refugee Week, BRMC is coordinating a fun evening for kids from the African and other newly arrived communities. It's essentially an extension of Father Kunen's Monday night activities session run for Sudanese kids in conjunction with Ballarat Grammar

Everyone is invited, not just African kids. Come along and take part in a range of sporting activities including Soccer and Basketball. There will be some players present from the **Ballarat Miners Basketball Club** and the **Red Devils Soccer Club**.

It's on from 6pm on Monday night, June 20th in the Gym at Grammar School in Forest Street Wendouree.

There will be pizza and drinks afterwards.



What is the Settlement Grants program

A **free** and **confidential** service for Refugees and Immigrants (depending on visa types) who have been living in Australia for less than 5 years.

What assistance is available?

- Help clients to become self reliant and to participate in Australian society as soon as possible after arrival.
- Case management.
- Assistance with completing documents.
- Support letters for housing applications.
- Advocacy.
- Referrals to a range of services including financial, legal, housing, torture and trauma counselling, education, training and employment.
- Help to make immigration Law Service appointments.
- Provide information sessions for recently arrived immigrants.

- Community development with recently established associations.
- Capacity building with mainstream services.
- Integration – assist with participation in community and social interest groups.

Where do we go?

Ballarat Community Health is the lead agency for the Settlement Grants Program. The SGP role is split between two part-time positions – one based at Ballarat Community Health (BCH) and one at Child and Family Services (CAFS).

Who do we talk to?

Ballarat Community Health (BCH) 710 Sturt Street, Ballarat
Shiree Pilkinton Ph: 5338 4500
Child & Family Services (CAFS) 115 Lydiard St North Ballarat
Evie Dichiera Ph: 5337 3353

Upcoming Activities

Come and celebrate the 17+ different cultures we have living in Ballarat at...

KALEIDOSCOPE
proudly sponsored by City of Ballarat

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council meets Youth Services

The Indigo Children
BCMA African Percussionists // BLX Koori group
George Laurie and Lucy Timms // Ballarat African Association Youth Dance Group

All ages event - smoke, drug and alcohol free
Free Entertainment
Artwork to be purchased
Auslan Interpreter service will be present

The Mining Exchange
Saturday June 18th 2011
6pm - 9pm

Sponsors & Supporters

ethnic communities' council of victoria

2011 Refugee Week Public Forum

LABELS AND LIABILITIES
WHEN IS A REFUGEE NO LONGER A REFUGEE ?

6.30pm – 9.00pm
Wednesday, 22 June 2011

fortyfive downstairs
45 Flinders Lane
Melbourne

refreshments provided

Terms such as **refugee** can have a huge impact on personal identity, public perception and social policy.

In this timely public forum, recent and not-so-recent refugees discuss the positives and negatives of the **refugee** label, its influence on self esteem and life opportunities, and how long an individual has to reside in a new country before the categorisation is no longer applicable or desirable.

RSVP : (03) 9349 4122 or eccv@eccv.org.au

FREE EVENT BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

www.eccv.org.au

Refugee Week

Interfaith Service

See Page 9 for details

Some Other Refugee Week Activities

Community radio: Refugee Week in Ballarat

Voice FM 99.9 Thursday 16 June between 10.00 and 11.00 am
Contact K. Morton 5332 3414
Ballarat Circle of Friends 93, Australian Refugee Association

Unite to End Mandatory Detention

March in Melbourne on World Refugee Day
Royal Exhibition Building, Carlton (Nicholson St entrance)
Sunday 19 June, 12.30 pm
Organised by the Refugee Advocacy Network
0402 262 753 or 0413 377 978

What sort of Australia do we want?

Former Prime Minister **Malcolm Fraser**
Masonic Hall, Havelock St, Maryborough
2.00 pm on Sunday 19 June, 2011
Tickets: \$12 & \$8 (Conc) payable at door
Hosted by Rural Australians for Refugees

Strange Birds in Paradise

Regent Cinema, Lydiard St Ballarat A story of West Papua, its beautiful country, its refugee issues, its human rights issues and its environmental issues, with the evocative music of their country under the watchful eye of David Bridie

Thursday 23 June 6.45 pm . Tickets \$15 available from The Bean Barn, 217 Sturt St Ballarat or Ballarat Circle of Friends 93, Australian Refugee Association. Contact Doreen 5334 2961 or Kath 5332 3414 Followed by Q & A with Charlie Hill-Smith (Filmmaker) Remember the West Papuans who lived in Ballarat for a time, and support today's asylum seekers/refugees Hosted by Ballarat Circle of Friends 93, Australian Refugee Association 5332 3414

Information Table

Stocklands, Wendouree
Thur/Fri 16/17 June 3.00 pm - 7.00 pm
Sat 18 June 10.00 am - 3.00 pm
Visit the table and learn more about asylum seekers. Why do they come ? Gather some helpful information.
Ballarat Circle of Friends 93, Australian Refugee Association

There are two non negotiable inescapable, hard core realities of humane existences. The first is referred to as the: law of loss. The second is the survival mechanism of fight or flight. It is the most primitive and irrevocable human/animal reflex. When faced with a significant or perceived threat, we resist or we run.

That is why growing numbers who fear an eruption of civil war and for their lives are walking out of the Ivory Coast and heading for Liberia. It is why tens of thousands have fled the Sudan. It is why people get into boats to come to Australia.

The only conclusion we can morally draw from the Christmas Island disaster is that imprisonment of asylum seekers is wrong.

Lyn Bender – Psychologist Employed at Woomera in 2002 Ballarat Courier Jan 2011

Delacombe Neighbourhood Renewal

Delacombe Neighbourhood Renewal is entering its final two years (of an eight year program) and is marking this by revitalising its governance arrangements and engaging the Delacombe community in a discussion around its *Action Plan 2011-12*.

The Renewal team works to address areas of disadvantage in the Delacombe community and focuses on six priority areas: health and wellbeing; crime prevention and safety; employment and learning; housing and the physical environment; pride and participation and government responsiveness in service delivery (check out www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au for more information).

The revised Action Plan sets very high standards around improved amenity, livability and service integration for residents in Delacombe: our residents deserve nothing less. Over late June

and early July 2011, a series of five focus groups will explore in detail the proposed actions under the priority areas: we are inviting all residents, employees and volunteers from the Delacombe area, along with our stakeholders, to contribute to these discussions and ensure the Renewal team is taking the right actions at the right time with the right partners.

Our goal is simple: we will work hard to make Delacombe a great place to live for all its residents. To do this, we will lead, we will partner, and we will advocate. And we welcome your contribution.

The Renewal team is Jen Pollard, Place Manager; Shannon Meadows, Partnerships and Participation Officer; Jodi Stone, Integrated Service Coordinator. We are at 16 Nandiriog Drive, Delacombe and can be reached on 5335 7327.





FAABI
Invites you to

20th Year Anniversary
and
113th Philippine Independence
Ball

Saturday 9th of July 2011
6:00 p.m. till late
St. Patrick's College Pavilion
1431 Sturt Street Ballarat

Admission:
\$45 per person - 3 Course Meal Drinks at bar prices
Attire: Formal or Filipiniana (Barong)



Seats are limited. Tickets must be booked and paid by Saturday July 2, 2011



For bookings contact: Sherley Hart on 53 381 266 / 0417 331 756
or Virgie Hocking on 53 381 266 / 0428 458 081

Philippine Independence Day Celebration



The Filipino Australian Association of Ballarat (FAABI) is inviting you to join in celebrating Philippine Independence Day. There will be an Independence Day History presentation, dances and other video presentations. Entrance is FREE.

WHEN: Friday 17 June 2011 6:30 pm

WHERE: GPlace Building (BRMC Office)
102 English Street
Golden Point, 3350

Please bring your family, friends and a plate to share

For more information you can email: dylareigne@bigpond.com

Supported by:




Chinese Australian Cultural Society of Ballarat: Our group is progressing at a very high standard; Lions are always out doing functions. Our Committee and friends will be Celebrating "Sticky Rice Evening" @Tokyo Grill House on 6th June; Committee members enjoy lots of get togethers.

Dates to Watch out for: Winter Warm Up (TBA August or Sept)
Major Multicultural Concert @ Wendouree Performing Arts (Friday 11 November 2011)

May I take this opportunity to thank all those lovely people who came to visit me whilst in St John Hospital and Home with lovely flowers and goodies. My knee replacement is coming along, only on 1 crutch now, I thank Mr Andrew Byrne for his wonderful work on me. No more pain with the knee.

International Women's Day Dinner As mentioned elsewhere we donated \$1,328.50 to Ballarat Hospice. I was so proud to be able to hand over the cheque which went towards an oxygen Machine to be used for patients, well done. I thank Theresa Skrypko for helping me to decorate the tables; they were just beautiful flowers by Stems, and Leanne from I Do Printing. Seventy two ladies came, a wonderful banquet was served by Joe & Francis at the Inn of Khong. A harpist from Melbourne sponsored by Mr. Geoff Howard MLA along with Erica Lapina, singer from Filipino Association gave some items.

Mrs. Deesley Beechy was guest speaker. I thank all the ladies for coming to this special event, it was a great ladies get together.

Georgina L. Vagg Women's Officer Fundraising Coordinator

Profile: Fr. Peter Kunen

Peter Kunen

In 1989, Peter's father was killed and his family was forced to flee from the Longechuk and Maiwut areas of the Eastern Upper Nile area in Sudan. Peter spent fourteen years in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya and was separated from his family for all of this time. Fr Peter arrived in Colac, Australia in 2004 and became an Australian citizen in 2006. He finished a Diploma of Theology in 2007 at Charles Sturt University. During this time, the Red Cross found Peter's family in Sudan and in November 2007, Peter was reunited with his mother, two brothers and sisters. He had not seen his family for eighteen years.

Peter found the conditions that his family and community were living in were appalling. In 2005, peace had been established and many of the Nuer people returned to their villages only to find there was nothing left. There was no water, shelter, schools, churches or medical centres. The 30,000 people living there now, share one water pump and drink from the river with the animals. Although they have managed to build some resources any schooling is conducted in the open under the shade of the trees. There are no books or writing materials and no school buildings. As such, education is limited and most only have equivalent to primary school level.

In Sudan, people live in grass huts. They grow their own food or move around with their cattle, living a nomadic lifestyle. Men are responsible for supplying the food. The women and children grind and prepare the food by hand. They collect water and tend the livestock. These essential tasks prevent the children from attending school.



ACKAPA African Christian Kush Aid Program of Australia Inc.

is a not for profit organisation created to raise funds in order to support and improve living conditions in Southern Sudan. By identifying the needs of the communities, the money that is raised can be used to purchase specific equipment, provisions or services to empower communities that are impoverished and vulnerable. In 2008 Fr. Peter Kunen, founded ACKAPA aiming to raise enough funds to buy a grinding machine and was able to deliver the equipment on January 2009. The villagers set up the machine and soon the women were lining up to grind their corn. Father Peter is now trying to raise funds to buy a water pump for the villagers.

Fr. Peter Kunen is an assistant Priest at Anglican Cathedral of the Christ the King, Ballarat Diocese. He continues his work by giving presentations to schools, business groups, clubs and community organisations to raise awareness of the issues that the Sudanese people face. Anyone is welcome to become a member of ACKAPA Inc, help with fund raising, donations or volunteer work.

For further enquiries please contact: Fr. Peter Kunen Phone: 03 5336 1569 Mobile: 0431 204 952 Email: ackapa1@gmail.com

BRMC has nominated Fr. Peter for the Victorian Refugee Recognition Award 2011 sponsored by the Victorian Multicultural Commission. Fr. Peter has also just been Commissioned to be the Parish Priest at the Ballan Anglican Church. Congratulations Peter.

Refugee Week Interfaith Service

Tuesday 21st June 5pm

Anglican Cathedral

Lydiard Street, Ballarat

Speaker: **Moses Taban** who is a chairman of Southern Sudan Referendum Committee in Melbourne. Moses is an excellent presenter.

Choirs: Colac Sudanese Choir, Ballarat Grammar School (Lead by Musical Director of Anglican Cathedral)

Togolese and Sudanese singer groups will also present their items.

Chinese singer Ruth and her group will also sing.

All welcome. Refreshments provided

Sponsored by: 



SleepOut

Friday June 24th

Bree, Anna & Ashleigh

Ph: 0434 430 602 / Email: inntheirshoes@live.com.au / Website: www.inntheirshoes.org

In conjunction with: 

The Australian Government's '**Swap It, Don't Stop It**' campaign encourages the community to make small, healthy lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of some chronic diseases.

'Swap It, Don't Stop It' features Eric, a likeable but overweight blue balloon character. Eric encourages the community to make some simple lifestyle changes to become healthier – for example: to swap big for small (portion control); swap fried for fresh (nutritional quality); swap sitting for moving (physical activity); and swap watching for playing (physical activity).

Featuring press, radio and online advertising, Eric demonstrates practical things Australians can change in their daily lives to help achieve better health outcomes for themselves and their families. There is also a range of translated resources such as a 12 week planner and brochure available on the campaign website www.swapit.gov.au

"The health status of migrants varies according to a range of factors," says Executive Manager of the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health, Ms. Michal Morris. "The Swap It, Don't Stop It

campaign is important for migrants adjusting to different lifestyles and food. They can often fall under the radar for healthier eating and physical activity information because of language barriers and health priorities specific to their communities; this means they can become susceptible to some chronic diseases."

"We, as health professionals, community educators, and other community sources of information, play an important role in promoting health literacy and understanding in the ethnic community. This campaign provides valuable resources" said Ms. Morris, "helping people make small decisions when they are in the supermarket, in the kitchen or when playing with the kids, which can all make a real difference."

Rehka Sanghi
Account Director
Cultural Perspectives



New changes at ASIC Introducing the Credit Outreach Team

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission have made some positive changes over the past two years. A national financial literacy strategy is now in place since taking over responsibility from the Financial Literacy Foundation in 2008. Adding to this, from July 1 2010, ASIC became the national regulator of consumer credit. This new legislation, the National Consumer Credit Protection Act, aims to increase consumer protection for all Australians. An important part of this new change has been the implementation of the national Credit Outreach Team. The team consists of Credit Outreach Educators, in each state and territory, who develop and deliver credit education strategies. These strategies will help you, and the multicultural groups you deal with, make informed choices about credit. They will also guide you to information about how to get help if things go wrong. ASIC's credit education materials (available on www.fido.gov.au) are to be translated into a variety of languages.

What is the Credit Outreach Team doing to increase consumer awareness?

One of the key roles of the Credit Outreach Educators is to work in partnership with Government and community agencies so they

can inform their clients about these new changes. This will in turn empower consumers to make informed choices in relation to credit. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities can often be confronted with many different types of credit and be unaware of their rights and responsibilities with this. For this reason, we are focusing on this community to increase their understanding about credit and debt. Another area of focus for the Credit Outreach Team is mortgage stress and the credit related issues within this.

Making complaints to ASIC about Credit Providers

The Credit Outreach Team also takes complaints whilst in the field about misbehaviour or illegal activity from credit providers. You can also contact ASIC's Infoline on 1300 300 630 to make a complaint.

Who to contact?

If you would like more information or to inquire about your workers receiving training in the new credit regime, contact your state Credit Outreach Team member on the number listed below: Michelle Bonardi 03 9280-3447 or Hannan Amin 03 9280-4220

Some thoughts and quotes on asylum seekers, refugees, immigrants.

Quotes from Philippe Legrain's best selling book "Immigrants – Your country needs them"

Migration is the oldest action against poverty. It selects those who most want help. It is good for the country to which they go; it helps break the equilibrium of poverty in the country from which they come. What is the perversity in the human soul that causes people to resist so obvious a good? – J. K. Galbraith

Strangers instinctively question things that natives take for granted. They stimulate new perspectives because, simply, many things strike them as odd or stupid. That's why it's great for any tribe to have a smart stranger injected into it.

In Australia, one study suggests that by 2010 the average immigrant (this includes refugees) will be a net contributor to the government's budget to the tune of A\$5,800. More broadly, Australia is likely to gain from immigration by spreading the huge cost of defending and providing infrastructure for its vast, continent sized country over a larger population

Why does multiculturalism appear to work so much better in Canada? Because Canadians do more than pay lip service to it; they are genuinely committed to making a success of it. For instance, the City of Toronto translates all official documents into a dozen languages. The children of immigrants are encouraged to learn their parents' mother tongue at school. The Multiculturalism Act makes it official.

We take it for granted that restrictions on the movement of people should exist. In particular, we assume that is normal and desirable for people in rich countries that people in poor countries should be confined within their national borders, just as medieval serfs were once tied to the land. We never stop to think that perhaps we would all be better off in the latter day serfs were set free, because they would be vastly more productive if they were not confined to their poor native lands.

Profile: Brigitte Kerrutt

Born in Koenigsberg/East Russia (now Kaliningrad/Russia) my mother had to flee westwards with us five children in March 1945. The Russians were about eight hours behind us when my mother fell ill. We were overrun by the Russians in a small town in the later DDR. Four years of hunger followed, accompanied by almost daily life-threatening situations whilst trying to avoid starvation. When I was almost eleven we succeeded in crossing the border to West-Germany, where again we were refugees, lived with six persons in one room on concrete floor for several years until we built our house ourselves; from school I marched straight to the building site as did my brothers. We all were happy not having to avoid an evil meaning landlord anymore, who loved to threaten and kick us children.

At the end of year 10 I had to leave school with one year to go for any kind of education which enabled me to earn my living the moment I turned 18 as my orphan pension would stop then. I got into a foreign language correspondent course at the end of which I started to work with a shipping agent in Hamburg. I rented a pantry for 30 marks a month, which was one third of my net pay. My life as a workaholic had started. Working overtime was more the rule than exception. I lived on dry rolls, milk, coffee and powder soups – and had started to smoke. It could not be a surprise that I was underweight, had several stomach ulcers and a nervous breakdown when I was 24 years old.

After 15 years of work in three different firms I got the chance to attend the University in Hamburg after a successful entry exam for mature aged students. I studied economics and started to love life. However, as I was 10 years older than the average age of my fellow students, I had to think of getting back into the workforce after an extra year upgrading my degree.

Much to my amazement and despite frantic efforts I could not find a job: overqualified. This fact, in my opinion, led to a major heart attack when I was 38 years old. Despite all the attention the doctors paid me, I had two more heart attacks in the third week in hospital and fought for my life. After three months I was brought directly to rehabilitation where I stayed for another three months. I was suicidal; the doctor had told me that overnight I turned 60 and if I survived five years I had a good chance to live another five years.

All my efforts to find a job were in vain. Who wanted somebody who is overqualified and now 60% disabled as well? Finally I wrote a letter each to the University Hospital Hamburg and the main job centre in Germany describing my situation and if they would please give me a chance to try myself out. So far, nobody gave me that chance; should I fail I would have to accept that I have become a burden to society. Both institutions wanted me. I chose the hospital, did the first inventory after 75 years and after one year became the hospital administrator for the surgeries – a pilot scheme: introducing commercial bookkeeping.

Two years later I had to face a meeting with the Union. I heard the head of personal say: "We all know you are working 140% but you cannot expect your staff doing the same." I thought "but they know that I am 60% disabled, and still ask me to work so hard?" I answered my own question: "You are doing it without being asked." – "But what would I say if I had a re-infarction? Would I be glad that finally the stress is over?" – "Oh no, what did I do with the three years after my infarction? I did not learn a thing but am heading the same way which got me disabled in the first place...What is the purpose of my life? It can't be working myself to death or adding children to this world – what then is it? And if I can work like a healthy person then I want to holiday like a healthy person.

I rang my friend in Victoria asking whether I could come for holidays. "Are you allowed to fly again?" – "Never mind that." I had a fantastic holiday, no trouble with my heart and when I flew back I had the application for migration in my handbag. The interview with the Australian diplomatic mission followed – and I waited for a reply. The Health Department asked for my job application to introduce commercial bookkeeping in all Hamburg hospitals and train the people on the job. Wasn't that a number too big for me? I was working overtime on a daily basis now already...I waited for a reply.

The professor of heart surgery was negotiating with the Senate of Hamburg to have my pilot scheme employment changed into a permanent position. I waited for a reply.

Which of the three options would I prefer? For three months now I came up with a different solution every day; but this was a too vital decision for my future!

On the search for my purpose in life I had become a born again Christian. One morning I thought of seeking help from God. I prayed: "Dear heavenly father, you know best what is best for me. Will you please make the decision? I will not question it! But I need to be sure that it is your decision, so if possible please give it to me in writing. In Jesus name. Amen."

When I came home late that night, I found the letter from the Australian Government: "You are welcome in Australia." Although it was the most uprooting solution, leaving all "securities" behind, not knowing what to expect in Australia, I had such a peace in my heart that I did not hesitate and gave notice the next day. Nobody really understood me, and I - being a baby Christian - was not game enough to tell that I left the decision to God, whom I trust with my life. It truly was a miracle that I got the 'OK' from Australia as applicants being overweight only are being refused entry.

I arrived in Melbourne in October 1982 with a "good chance to live another five years" but this time with God by my side.

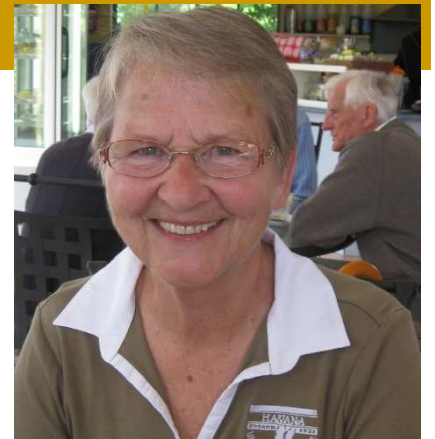
My Australian friend asked me to look after her house in Ballarat while she was on holidays. On her return I told her that I liked Ballarat so much more than Melbourne that I wanted to buy a house here. She arranged for an Estate Agent to pick me up. When I returned a few hours later I told her that I had found a house. She was extremely irritated: "That is not how you do it here! You need to let several agents show you what they have got in their books and then you chose."

For four weeks I was house-hunting on a daily basis. The second or third agent told me that day that he had shown me actually all houses but one. "There must be something wrong with it, because it is already on the market for two years." The date rang a bell in me, but I could not remember straight away. After looking at the description I asked: "Show it to me, please."

This was the first house which I had seen and wanted to buy! I thanked God that it was still available and asked the agent, whether he could ask a nearby neighbour whether he would sell me a piece of land for a garden and how much he wanted for it. "My" house was a corner-house. The agent came back to the car, shaking his head. Astonished I asked him: "He does not want to sell?" – "He said 'yes'" – "Why are you shaking your head then?" – "I do not understand what is going on here..." he answered, looking intensely at me. Now I asked him to see whether the house-owner would agree to reduce his asking-price by that amount which the "garden-neighbour" wanted. The agent hesitated. I offered: "Shall I go?" He was on his way. Coming back he shook his head again. I waited. "I have never before experienced such negotiations." – "What did he say?" – "He agreed..." – "Hallelujah!" Now he wanted to know whether I wanted to move into the house in 30, 60 or 90 days. "30 days is fine", I replied, "My container is waiting in Melbourne already." – Shaking his head he went. On his return he asked me: "Don't you need any finance?" I nodded. "You will not get it within 30 days!" – "We shall see. Drive me to the bank, please."

(To be continued next issue)

Brigitte Kerrutt Secretary German Austrian Assoc.



Featured Volunteers

I saw an ad in the Ballarat Courier advertising for volunteers at BRMC. I thought to myself that's just what I need. The application and process was surprisingly quick and I cut down my hours at Ferndale Confectionery to enable my start straight away with two days a week. I knew I had made the best decision for myself.

Straight out of school and into university I did not expect to get a job handed to me I knew I had to be disciplined about my decisions and I knew I had to make goals. For a whole year and a half of my life I had been applying and applying for my dream job hoping someone would give me a chance all I needed was my foot in the door and I would prove my worth. Every time I applied and got knocked back although it made me sad, I did not give up trying. It was obvious that I needed experience something to really make me stand out from the rest. I found this experience at BRMC.

The help and support I gained from BRMC was just amazing but not only did I gain from this experience, the staff at BRMC also gained from my help, support and dedication. It was a great feeling to be welcomed by such beautiful people who were

willing to help me always with a smile on their face. It was an even better feeling to know that I could also make a difference within their work place. Not only did I apply for the volunteer work for experience within Admin but also the experience within cultures in and around the Ballarat community. Australia has been a multicultural country since I can remember and it is great to see that Ballarat has become so open and welcoming.

BRMC helped me achieve a goal; they helped me show my full potential. I was able to build up more confidence I was given a chance to build up my skills. I feel as though I did not give back as much as I gained, but you know by a simple thank you and a smile was greatly appreciated by the staff. That's why it was great to work in such a supportive environment where all the workers are happy and love what they do helping people.

Recently, I was offered a full time position at Cuthbert's Barristers and Solicitors. This is my dream job; something I had worked so hard for was just right in front of me. Although I will miss working at BRMC and alongside the great staff here, I know my time has come to grab what I've wanted



and run with it. When a great opportunity comes along you take that chance and never look back on what could have been you make this opportunity your time to shine.

My name is Nicole Loverso and I had a dream. BRMC helped me achieve this dream and I will be forever great full. A million thanks to you all for helping me in more ways than you could imagine the day you believed in me and gave me a chance was that step forward I had been waiting for a long time. Thank You

Nicole Loverso

Naizell's Testimony

First of all, I would like to say a big thank you to all BRMC staff for recognising the work of the volunteers in the different programs. I would like to congratulate them for their very well organised programs which have a big impact on the community.

I started volunteering at BRMC Multicultural Tucker about a year ago in 2010. Being new to Australia, I found volunteering to be a rewarding experience because I met and could make friends with other people of different cultural backgrounds. It is so good that we can work together in unity in the friendly atmosphere that is the kitchen.

I do help in cleaning the vegetables and meat, cutting them to what is required and carrying out tasks that need to be done as

directed by Gayle and Yin. Yin of course is a great chef. He looks after the volunteers. He makes sure that the people also enjoyed their meal. It is also great that BRMC staff like Jason Shorter, Virgie Hocking and others are also there to encourage and support the volunteers.

In conclusion, I am delighted to give my time as a volunteer because I do believe that this is one of the ways by which I can be involved and actively participate in community development. Thank you very much.



Naizell Custodio

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