

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Newsletter

February - March 2012

Harmony Fest a Great Success

For the first time BRMC partnered with the City of Ballarat in presenting Harmony Fest on February 10th. Despite threatening weather, the event was a great success with a fantastic mix of music food, information and stalls featuring goods for sale.



Multicultural Awards

Ballarat figured very prominently in the annual Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) Excellence Awards Ceremony in Melbourne that was held at Government House on the 14th December, 2011

BRMC was very honoured to be nominated and presented with a Victorian Multicultural Award of Excellence for Community Services Delivery for its Multicultural Tucker Program. Mr Jason Shorter, HACC Team Leader and Project Co-ordinator, accepted this prestigious award on behalf of BRMC from the Premier. I was also very honoured to receive the VMC award for Excellent Service to the Multicultural Community of Ballarat as a founding and very active executive member of BRMC for the last 11+ years. This award was presented by the Governor General and recog-



nised outstanding achievements of an individual with more than 10 years of valuable service to the multicultural communities of Ballarat and the Region.

Voice FM (99.9), Ballarat's Community radio, also received a Community Service Excellence Award for its 12 ethnic radio programs that are facilitated each week to the wider community. Congratulations to the Management, staff and all the terrific volunteers who organise and present these most interesting, varied and informative programs. Ms Helen Bath, the radio station's co-ordinator, accepted this prestigious award on behalf of the station and community from the Premier.

Ms Mona Hawtal (an Executive Member of BRMC and former Multicultural Ambassador for the City of Ballarat) was also honoured and presented with a Distinguished Services Award for her excellent work as Secretary and Executive Member of the Ballarat Indian Association and the broader community over many years.

BRMC congratulates and extends best wishes to all Award recipients/organisations. This certainly reflects well on the multicultural community of Ballarat and the Region for the excellent service provision. It also is a credit to the dedicated and committed volunteers who contribute so generously of their time and expertise to the best outcome for our migrants, plus the wider community.

Frank Williams, Chair, BRMC

BRMC General Members Meeting
Tues 21st Feb 7 pm at GPlace. All welcome.

Chairperson's Report

On Behalf of the Executive Committee of BRMC I welcome all staff, volunteers and Cultural Associations/Groups back for 2012. We hope and trust that all members had a very good Christmas and New Year. Congratulations also to the Australian Chinese Cultural Association of Ballarat on their most recent celebration of the Chinese New Year; the "Year of the Dragon". To all other Cultural Groups who will celebrate various Cultural Events later this year, we wish them every success for a rewarding and satisfying year ahead. As we commence another very busy year a few quick reminders about some very important forthcoming community events and activities.

BRMC was delighted to partner with the City of Ballarat and Victorian Multicultural Arts in presenting this year's "Harmony Fest" on Friday 12th February, 2012. As the annual Ballarat Begonia Festival Parade again looms large, we are seeking the direct participation and active support of all our valued members. We are delighted to have Bartlett's Blinds ongoing sponsorship to assist BRMC's float and earth ball entry on the 12th March 2012 Please come along in your National Dress/Costume and help us to display Ballarat's rich and vibrant multicultural background and thereby celebrate our social cohesion and unity in diversity.

Following on from these celebrations will be Cultural Diversity Week during 17 – 24th March 2012. BRMC has a VMC Grant to provide a Multicultural Expo and therefore needs all the Cultural Associations' support and their members' involvement on this special occasion.

Another important event is the celebration of International Women's Day. Ms Georgina Vagg and Ms Sherley Hart are organising a sumptuous

Chinese banquet at the Inn of Khong again this year. For more details about this event, scheduled for the 26th March 2012 from 7:00pm don't hesitate to contact Georgina (0408 109 471) or Sherley (0417 331 756) ASAP to book your reservation for this special Women's Day celebration.

Later in the year we will also be involved in Refugee Week activities and events will be highlighted closer to the event.

Given all of these major activities, we need your ideas, suggestions and support to enrich all of our cultural celebrations this year. Therefore it is very important that all friends members and Cultural Associations, attend the first General Meeting at GPlace on Tuesday 21st February 2012 at 7:00pm. I reiterate that all BRMC events rely heavily on your vital support to ensure the best possible result and outcomes. We certainly appreciate the efforts of many people and organisations for their ongoing assistance; but we also need even greater efforts to best showcase our different cultures, our local talents, varied customs, cuisines, dances and music. As well as this, could I also remind all our members that if you would like BRMC to assist you or your organisation in some way please do not hesitate to contact us at GPlace to further strengthen our partnership and achieve the best outcome for everyone concerned. Good luck and every success throughout the year and for the future to all our members, supporters and Cultural Groups

Frank Williams, Chairperson BRMC



Executive Officer's Report

As we enter the Year of the Dragon BRMC is facing the best of times and the worst of times. There is so much activity around the place. Multicultural Tucker won a multicultural award for excellence late last year (along with Committee members Frank Williams and Mona Hatwal and BRMC member Community Radio Voice FM). The Migrant English Program is training more and more voluntary tutors who are doing so much to assist newly arrived migrants under the leadership of Judy Brumby. The Community Partners Program continues to provide assessment and advice to the older migrant cohort. We have a new project commencing soon in the Delacombe Neighbourhood around community safety. We assisted with the funding and promotion of the recent Harmony Fest. We are planning a comprehensive Expo during Cultural Diversity Week. Our regional programs in the Moorabool and Hepburn Shires continue to grow. Our engagement with other agencies involved with the sector is developing and so on.

On the other hand BRMC is very stretched financially. Although GPlace is a wonderful headquarters for BRMC, it is expensive (for a community

organisation like us) with high overheads. Without support, we simply can't continue to stay at GPlace. We have approached the City of Ballarat for support. It would be fitting for the City to support the continued development of GPlace as they were among the original organisations that conceived the idea of converting the derelict Golden Point Primary School into a community facility and hub.

We are also wanting to see the various agencies involved with multicultural services in Ballarat (and there are a few!) to come together and see if there are ways we can improve the coordination of multicultural services across the city and region. Again we have asked the Mayor to convene a meeting of these agencies and individuals in the first instance. The ideal outcome would be a Multicultural Hub in the central city where anyone could go to access all services relevant to multiculturalism.

Jeff Langdon Executive Officer



Who's Who

BRMC Executive Committee

Chairperson: Frank Williams

Deputy Chair: David Vendy

Secretary: Khushi Maharaj

Asst. Secretary: Carmel Kavanagh

Treasurer: Lisa Howlett

Assistant Treasurer: Lynda Andeobu

Interfaith Officer: Fr. Peter Kunen

Publicity Officer: Brigette Kerrutt

Women's Officer: Georgina Vagg

Youth Officer: Vacant

Community Representatives:

Sherley Hart, Mona Hatwal, Mary Nyaw, Ugo Lo Iancono

Staff

Executive Officer: Dr Jeff Langdon

Admin Trainee.: Annie Hamerton

Finance Coordinator: Regina Bautista

Volunteer Coordinator.: Nenita Drough *

HACC Team Leader: Jason Shorter

HACC Support: Vacant

MCT Food Coordinator: Vacant

CPP Coordinator: Kim Romeo

Telelink/SSG Coord: Virgie Hocking

Migrant English Program: Judy Brumby*

* Voluntary positions.

Contact BRMC (Closed Mondays)

Office Address:

GPlace Cnr. Dunn & English Street
Golden Point, 3350

Phone: 03 5332 5941

Fax: 03 5332 5944

Email: admin@brmc.org.au

Postal Address:

PO Box 1418 Bakery Hill, 3354

Become a member of BRMC.

Membership is free and is open to aims and objectives of BRMC.



organisations and individuals who support the

Multicultural Services in Ballarat

In 2011 University of Ballarat student Kate Allen undertook a study of multicultural services in Ballarat as part of her degree studies. Her full report is available from BRMC's office but a summary is reproduced here.

Executive Summary

'The displacement of people as a result of persecution is one of the contemporary world's most persistent and pressing issues' (Hugo, 2011).

Accepting displaced people, the Australian government encourages migrants and refugees to settle in regional areas (Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, (ECCV, 2011). As a new settlement destination keen to boost their population, Ballarat established a Regional Humanitarian Settlement Pilot program in 2007.

Provision of effective services to the recently arrived Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities in regional areas is a significant contributor for successful resettlement of displaced CALD people. It is therefore imperative for effective services to be tailored to meeting the diverse needs of CALD people assisting in a successful resettlement.

This project examines what issues feature within Ballarat's services available to CALD clients. It focuses on reoccurring issues and needs, drawing on experiences and knowledge of those (in the field) providing services. Correlating to identified issues, a mapping project included organisations that provide services to Ballarat's CALD community.

The project found that while there had been some positive outcomes,

service provision was affected by a range of issues, causing problems and complications in delivery. Despite numerous barriers in provision of services to Ballarat's CALD community, services available, relationships between service providers and the CALD community, benefits to the community assist in the settlement process of CALD people. The research project also concluded that funding, collaborations and partnerships are vital to effective service delivery.

This project provides an evaluation of services available to Ballarat's CALD community, including the range of complexities associated with delivery. Based on the findings it is clear that partnerships and collaborations between organisations benefit in providing services with an emphasis on best outcome for CALD clients. Continued and increased dialogue across a range of service areas for provision of effective services is vital to assist successful CALD settlement.

To ensure the needs of the CALD community are suitably met, the following recommendations were made:

- The map should further evolve into an interactive online map with a listing of organisation names linked to websites.
- Key information of each service provider alongside a visible map should be included within the City of Ballarat's 'Multicultural Community Services Directory'.
- A needs assessment of a Multicultural Hub to provide core services, information and other services across a wide range of identified need.

Delacombe Community Safety

BRMC has obtained a grant in partnership with Delacombe Neighbourhood Renewal and Delacombe Community House, from the Department of Justice to employ a part time project coordinator to lead a series of activities over a 4 month period. The project coordinator will be based at the Delacombe Community House and work 15 hours a week for 12 weeks. The role will be to deliver a multipronged approach to addressing safety issues in the local community.

There are three primary community safety issues that our project seeks to address.

- Sense of safety and belonging for new migrants: New residents often experience disconnection, social isolation and lack of confidence in public safety to approach authorities for advice, support and direction.
- Social unrest and intolerance within the community: raising the awareness within the wider community to allow better acceptance and tolerance of cultural diversity.

- Community safety: engage residents to find and monitor safe walking routes to and from schools and other community sites, increasing the sense of safety and minimising anti-social behaviour.

The project addresses the above issues through a series of coordinated strategies.

- A series of workshops for the whole community raising awareness of cultural diversity.
- A series of workshops for new migrants building their confidence in Police and other community safety measures.
- Social and recreational activities that build cohesion and foster harmony across cultural and economic divides.
- Establishment of designated preferred walking paths to schools and other sites.

Creating community ownership for local safety by establishing a steering group to develop, deliver and maintain the effort through and beyond the life of the project.

Celebrations of Cultures

Our Celebration of Cultures Concert proved a great success. It was held at the Wendouree Centre for Performing Arts, a beautiful venue for such a great occasions. A big thank you to our main sponsors and supporters; the City of Ballarat, the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC), Sovereign Hill, Sherley Hart, Coles Supermarket, 3BA Ballarat (Power FM), The Ballarat Courier, Ballarat Grammar School, Highlands LLEN

We were delighted to have Mayor Cr. Craig Fletcher to welcome a huge audience. Guests included Mayor Cr Craig Fletcher, Mr Michael Van Vliet (VMC), Mr Geoff Howard MLA, Cr and Mrs John Philips (City of Ballarat). Artists were a great success and most enjoyable. Father Peter Kunen opened the evening with a prayer. MC once again was Mr Doug Sarah who outshined again, so it was great to have him on board. Also special

thanks to Ms Pam Maiden (Ticket Box). Artists from different Cultural Groups in Ballarat were fantastic along with Verchovnya Ukrainian Dancers from Melbourne also Spanish dancers Laura Uhe and Vikingo de Jerez.

Director back stage Ms Wendy Hall who along with Mr David Vendy had a huge job. My special thanks to Chair Frank Williams for his time spent running around also. Nenita, Annie, Lisa thank you for staffing the desk for the raffle and programs. Interval seemed a great time for people to mingle. Thanks to Annie for doing, such great programs. Before the evening, as guests arrived entertainment was provided by Dr Terence Fitzsimons Trio from Sovereign Hill. Once again it is with my great appreciation to thank all artists for their commitment and fantastic job. Well done to everyone who has helped in any way, to make such a great success of the evening. I am always proud to organise and facilitate any cultural

functions on behalf of BRMC and its members.

Ms Georgina Vagg
Women's Officer/
Fundraising Co-ordinator.



The Voice

99.9 Voice FM gives a voice to the multicultural community in Ballarat and currently has Chinese, Dutch, Filipino, German, Greek, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Thai programs. Very soon we will also have a new African program. Many of these programs are supported by Ethnic Grants from the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF). This funding is an extremely important source for our volunteer team.

Prior to Christmas Voice FM was thrilled to receive a nomination for a Multicultural Award. Our nomination was for outstanding achievements in promoting the linguistic and cultural diversity of Victoria's multicultural communities. We are grateful to all our volunteers who work within our community and for our station. The strengthening partnership with BRMC is being reflected with the growth in ethnic programs as we work to provide a voice for our diverse community.

On Wednesday November 14th, Helen Bath, Tully Smith, Charles Zhang and Robert Bath all went to Government House Melbourne for the Victorian Multicultural Awards for Excellence. The ceremony paid tribute to those successfully nominated and included presentations of awards to individuals and organisations involved in this important work. The event was hosted by the Governor of Victoria. Voice FM received an award in the category of Service Delivery to Multicultural Victoria in the Media field! Helen Bath accepted the award on behalf of Voice FM which was presented by the Premier.

Our station, run by an amazing team of volunteers, was also proud to assist with promotion and broadcast of Harmony Fest 2012. We look forward to working closely with BRMC and the City of Ballarat to ensure that next year will be another successful event for our region.

We are also proud to have two more of our presenters stepping up their responsibilities within our region and being appointed as Multicultural Ambassadors. Charles Zhang and John Bradshaw have officially completed their time and now Catherine Toro who presents "The Latino Mix" on Sunday nights from 8pm and Klaudia Hochhuth who presents "Klaudia's Cocktail – the German program" on Wednesday afternoons from 1-3pm have commenced their role as the City of Ballarat's Multicultural Ambassadors for 2012-2014.

Our station is located in Dawson House, 15 Dawson St Sth and we welcome visitors calling in during office hours to visit our station and see how we operate. A program guide is available on our website www.voicefm.com.au or you can pop in and pick one up or send us an email. We look forward to working with BRMC in promoting events and activities that are relevant to our region.

Helen Bath – Operations Manager (Voluntary)

Need help?

PC Training

BRMC can offer you assistance with learning how to use a computer and the various programs that run on it.

Financial Counselling

We also have volunteers that can help individuals or groups with financial matters such as budgeting, using financial software, etc.

Friendly Visiting Service

If you are stuck at home why not ask BRMC to organise a visitor to come to your house and keep you company on a regular basis.

New Craft and Art Group

BRMC is starting an art and craft group particularly targeting newly arrived migrant women. If you are interested contact us at the office for more details.

Immigration Agent

The Immigration Law Service (provided by Diversitat) visits Ballarat on the third Thursday of the month. The service is available to refugee and humanitarian clients who have been in Australia for under 5 years. Please contact Evie Dichiera to arrange appointments with details of client visa-type, language requirements, and family migration issues. Contact details. Tel: 5337 3353

Multicultural Ambassadors

Klaudia Hochhuth	Germany
Ghulam Mohammad Moqaddam	Afghanistan
Aldona Kmiec	Poland
Igor Zovko	Croatia
Catherine Toro Bernal	Chile
Jessica Chuang	Taiwan
Maryam Aghdaee	England/Iran
Dimitri Dollard	Togo
Jeme Liang	China
Meeta Narsi	South Africa/India

Farewell Gayle

Gayle Roberts our Food Coordinator for MCT has had to take employment elsewhere. We'll miss you Gayle but good luck back teaching.



Keep an eye out for these!

PakoFest: February 25th

This is the annual Multicultural Festival in Geelong run by Diversitat. If you are interested in going FAABI is taking a bus down. Contact Virgie at the BRMC office for details. (5332 5941)

Multicultural Tucker: March 14th (Italian theme).

You need to book for these events. Call the office the week before.

Begonia Festival Parade: March 12th

This is a great annual event. BRMC's float will once again be sponsored by Bartlett's Blinds. Look out too for the Filipino, Chinese and other multicultural floats.



BRMC Sports Day: March 20th

A great day for the older migrant who wants to participate in a range of recreational and sporting activities.

Migrants and Employment Seminar March 5th

At BRMC. For newly arrived migrants seeking employment. RSVP to Christine Reupert 0459 812 854

Volunteers Expo: March 16th

A range of agencies that use volunteers will have displays in Bridge Mall on this day. Why not sign up?

Multicultural Expo at GPlace: March 24th

BRMC and its member groups will be hosting an open day at BRMC on March 24th at GPlace to showcase goods and food from around the world. The event will also include musical items, displays and information sessions.

What's on

AN EVENT FOR ALL WHO WORK FOR JUSTICE

Commemorate West Saharan Sabarawi People's National Day

At a Flag Raising Ceremony

On Monday, 20 February 2012

At 12 Noon

The Trades Hall
26 Camp St
Ballarat

Further Information: awsa.org.au



The poster features logos for BRMC, Ballarat Community Health, and cafs. The main text reads: "Migrants and Employment In Ballarat there are many job and training opportunities. To find out about them, then this seminar is for YOU!" Below this, it lists the event details: "When: Monday 5th March", "Where: BRMC (102 English Street, Golden Point, Ballarat)", "Time: 11 am to 1pm", and "RSVP: Christine Reupert 0459 812 854". It also notes "Light lunch provided".

REFUGEE CONVERSATION

ON SUNDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2012

At 3:00pm for 3:30 – 5:30 pm

Tracey Centre 126 THE AVENUE PARKVILLE

Sr Brigid Arthur will guide recent asylum seekers as they share stories with us. David Manne will discuss the legal position of refugees and asylum seekers in Australia. David acted for asylum seekers in the recent challenge to the Malaysian Solution in the High Court

Booking www.trybooking.com/BBUD
Enquiries: 9813 4023

Improve your English AND Improve your job hunting skills

The University of Ballarat can help you to look for a job, while you study English.
Employment Course for people who are studying English

The course will start in April, and will be held on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9.15 am to 3.00 pm. You will study: **Work place preparation** (includes understanding Australian workplaces and communication), **Job Seeking Skills** (phoning employers, letter and resume writing, interview practice), **English as a second language**, **Work Placement** (One week work placement in Term 4), **Occupational Health and Safety**

Cost: Concession \$50.00
Non-Concession \$575.00

At: University of Ballarat, Lydiard Street, SMB Campus - Brewery Building

Contact: Deborah Sharard phone 5327 8043 or Carmel Day on 5327 8240

University of Ballarat
Learn to succeed



Odyssey by Andreas Litras and John Bolton

March 7 Ballarat

8pm Wendouree Centre for Performing Arts
Bookings 5338 0980

After winning hearts around the world, local writer/performer Andreas Litras' remarkable one-man show Odyssey finally comes to Ballarat, back to where the story all began!! Playing at the Wendouree Performing Arts Centre on March 7th – book it in your diaries!

Odyssey weaves the stories of Andreas' family and their migration from Greece to a fish and chip shop in Ballarat through the legend of Odysseus, hero of the Trojan War. The performance turns the mythical world of Homer's epic upside-down with a tale of quiet domestic heroism, of hard work, fitting-in and making-do. The line between epic drama, Greek tragedy, comedy and the everyday disappears in this beautifully crafted autobiographical work.

While Andreas shares stories of his family and fish'n'chips, it is Karagiosi, the wise-cracking stage manager, who has the audience in hysterics with his own personal rendition of Homer's Odyssey.



Journeys and characters cross paths as the performance moves between Andreas and Karagiosi, past and present, Greece and Australia, memory and imagination. Stunning in its irreverence, passion and joy; Odyssey celebrates what it means to find home.

Internationally acclaimed, Odyssey has won hearts from Malaysia to London, Canada to New Zealand

March 13-31 Open Stage, Carlton (cnr Swanston and Grattan St's) 1pm -Tues, Thurs & Fri, 7.30pm -Wed-Sat, 5pm - Sundays
Information: 1300 099 660

"It was a virtuoso performance and Litras spun the three narratives together to make gold."
NZ Listener

"a rare diamond, cut with taste and precision"
Canberra Times

"Odyssey is a universal story, told with love and humour, and a delight to watch."
The Australian

'is a journey no one will want to miss',
Mail-Star, Canada

"beautifully comic, emotive and searingly real"
Time Out, London

Department of Justice at the Multicultural Tucker

Recently I was fortunate to be a guest speaker at the BRMC Multicultural Tucker lunch. Each month BRMC hosts a themed lunch where local community members from a variety of cultural backgrounds come together to celebrate multiculturalism and diversity.

My opportunity to present was on the same day as BRMC celebrated Oktoberfest, dishing up an oversized serving of traditional German/Austrian cuisine of smoked pork, sauerkraut, mash potato and peas. Knowing 100 guests are waiting for you to finish your presentation so they can enjoy their lunch puts some pressure on to get through your message within your allotted time!

I was made to feel most welcome by all and the experience provided an opportunity to discuss the services we provide in the Department of Justice, as well as meet some hard working volunteers, interesting characters and enjoy a great meal. After lunch, I had the opportunity to visit each table and briefly discuss the services provided by Department of Justice within the Hepburn/Grampians Region.

The Department of Justice provides services across the Grampians Region, incorporating the Shires of Golden Plains, Yarriambiack, Pyrenees, Northern Grampians, West Wimmera, Moorabool, Hindmarsh and Hepburn, the Rural Cities of Horsham and Ararat, and the City of Ballarat.

Our services include the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV), a free service available to help people settle their differences in an informal and fair way. The DSCV can help you if you are involved in a disagreement about fences, trees, noise, animals or neighbourhood disputes.

Community members can lodge an application for a birth, death or marriage certificate at our Regional Offices. A Justice Officer can accept your application, certify related identity documents, accept payments and assist with Births, Deaths and Marriages related enquiries.

Consumer Affairs Victoria provides advice to customers and businesses about renting rights and responsibilities, residential accommodation issues, building and renovating, refunds, lay-bys and warranties, travelling

con men, buying a car, retirement villages and managing debt. They provide free information sessions for consumers and businesses, tenants and landlords in the Grampians Region.

Community Correctional Services supervises offenders to ensure they meet the conditions of their court or parole orders. Many offenders serving Community-Based Orders complete valuable programs of community work including clearing bushfire-prone land and removing graffiti. Not-for-profit community organisations seeking assistance with voluntary work should contact the regional office.

Responsible Alcohol Victoria monitors and inspects licensed premises to ensure they abide by liquor laws and takes action to enforce these laws. Licensees can obtain information about liquor laws and their obligations at their local Justice Service Centre or online at www.justice.vic.gov.au/alcohol.

Sheriff's officers enforce court orders and collect unpaid fines and civil debts. Sheriff's work with people with outstanding fines to provide information on warrants and look at payment options, including payment plans and community work.

The Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee network brings together community and government representatives to develop responses to local justice issues in partnership with the Koori community. This includes developing culturally responsive programs and initiatives to reduce the risk of Koori youth becoming involved in the justice system, promoting justice-related services, and strengthening relationships between justice agencies and the Koori community.

For any enquiries you may have regarding the services offered by Department of Justice you can contact the Ballarat Regional Office on 4301 7000 or attend at 206 Mair Street, Ballarat. The Horsham Justice Service Centre contact number is 4344 1444 and is located on Level 2, 21 McLachlan Street, Horsham.

Andrew Wright Regional Manager,

Some more shots from the recent Celebrating Cultures concert



Useful Website

The Multicultural Resources Vic website provides a range of information, tools and resources to assist newer groups and organisations to become established and to further develop. The website includes: tip sheets, checklists and information, workshops, venue and room hire, mentoring & practical support, opportunities to identify what organisations and groups need and what they can offer others.

The website aims to encourage experienced groups and organisations to share knowledge, skills and information with those who are just starting out and trying to find their feet. Experienced groups and organisations also have the opportunity to share with each other.

The resources available on the website are designed to support those



who are just starting out or trying to expand what they do. The sheets and resources also provide links to websites and resources with more detailed and advanced information.

Other groups and organisations that have things they would like to share are encouraged to contribute to the website.

The website has been established as a component of the Multicultural Community Services Exchange Project, funded through the Department of Planning & Community Development and The William Buckland Foundation.

Contact Phone: 03 9689 9170

Contact Email: info@amcservices.org.au

Website: www.multiculturalresourcesvic.org.au

Self Preservation

This sounds somewhat pompous, but it was all the rage at that time, I'm writing about, the few years before World War 2. As a matter of fact, it only started after the war had started and my country was attacked and occupied by Germany. The German Government had developed a peculiar attitude towards Jews, communists and homosexuals. Of these groups, the Jews were most numerous. From the appearances of people it was almost impossible to determine who was a Jew, a communist or a homosexual. The Germans had an answer to this for the Jews, who had to register as such. They had to wear a yellow Star of David with the word 'Jew' printed on it when they were outside their home. But communists and homosexuals did not have to register and did not have to wear any especially identifiable sign. How did the Germans know who was a communist or a homosexual and why did they want to know? Just to punish them! No one in these groups could be identified by special skin colour, such as people from Africa or Australian Aborigines with a dark skin or with special facial features like people from South East Asia. No, members of these groups looked like all the other residents of west European countries. They put members of all three groups in concentration camps where many perished. To recognise a Jew was easy. They wore the star. But to find out who was a communist relied on information from others. There were of course people who belonged to all three groups and as Jews were most vulnerable with their star. Still the Germans were able to find out who was a communist or a homosexual.

I was one of the 'selected' groups, a Jew, and I wore the star. The German occupation forces made it compulsory for Jews to register as such and most of them did. Why? I thought at the time that most Jews had some affiliation with a Jewish organisation and that, therefore, it was possible for the Germans to find out that 'so-and so' was a Jew. Surnames also could be an indication. I think that was the main reason for most of us to register. In Amsterdam, about 10% of the population was Jewish. That meant there were about 80,000 of them. Most of that group were - before the war - quite poor and lived in a quarter close to the centre of the city, living in old very basic houses, flanking narrow streets. I did not live there. Our house was outside the city centre. It was somewhat better, although it did not have a bathroom. To have a bath or shower I had to go to the communal bathroom nearby.

At first, after Holland was occupied, there were hardly any restricting rules for Jews, but gradually they were introduced and enforced. We could not go to theatres, cinemas, use trams and buses. We had to hand in our bikes and walk. And then we were being picked up to be taken to concentration camps. I was determined that I was not being taken to one of those places.

Nobody knew with any certainty, what was really happening there, but Jewish refugees from Germany - and there were many in Holland - told horrible stories about these camps, which neither Jews nor non-Jews believed. "How can people behave like that?", people would say. However, after the war it proved to have been true. In early 1942 I found that the situation became rather threatening and I was able to arrange through an uncle of mine, a doctor and second in charge of the Health Department in Amsterdam, to get a position in the largest Jewish Hospital in Amsterdam as a trainee nurse. Quite a few people my age had found a similar position



there. That was March 1942. For the time I was safe. I followed with the others the appropriate nursing course. I was placed in the male surgical ward. Nurses and brothers at that time had to perform more duties than they do now. We had to clean the floors. We had to shave the men, which was an unusual procedure. And we had to distribute the midday meals.

We, as young people, were supposed to be hungry all the time and as there always was more than enough food for all the patients in the ward, we helped ourselves to a plate of food, which we

ate in a secluded place, an empty storage place. The management was not to know about me and never did as far as I know. We, the young ones, asked each other whether each of us had had the 'special' plate of food ensuring that no one was left out. Food at that time became scarcer, but we had enough. Religious Jews are not permitted to use a razor (safety razor or 'cut throat') on their skin and electric razors were just being introduced by Philips. They shaved by means of a nasty smelling paste, which was applied to their face, let sit for a few minutes and then removed, usually by means of a tablespoon. This compound 'burned' the hairs off, but, when the paste was left on the skin for too long, it gave the wearer a burning sensation. So, from time to time, some of the patients would cry out: "Brother, I'm burning!" I took the tablespoon, striking the edge over the palm of my hand, as if it were an old-fashioned razor and started to remove the paste from my first 'customer' asking, "Is the knife alright, Sir?" They all came back the next day for another shave.

One afternoon in early 1943 at visiting time, German soldiers entered the hospital and walked through the wards. Immediately a panic level developed, particularly amongst the visitors. As there were a number of empty trollies in the passage, some visitors jumped onto them just before the Germans reached the ward. An empty bed in a ward was also taken. When the Germans came to our ward, walking slowly around not saying a word, I went from one trolley to another and talked to the occupant. No reactions from the Germans, who disappeared shortly after. It was a warning that the hospital would not be really so secure. That became evident later.

I had another experience. It was August 1942 and I had a few days off and went to The Hague, to visit friends, by train and came back by train, which according to the timetable should have arrived in Amsterdam Central Station before 8pm, the start of a curfew for Jews, allowing me to reach the hospital in safety. The train arrived after 8pm and legally I could not be outside with my Star of David on. There was one solution; ask the stationmaster to write a note stating that the train had arrived late. I contemplated this for a moment and it crossed my mind that it might be possible that the stationmaster could not be trusted to be neutral and that he could decide to notify the German authorities. I therefore decided more or less on the spur of the moment to remove my Star of David and walk to the hospital, not a long distance if I went through the Old Jewish Quarter. I did and walked through totally empty streets; that is, all occupants of the old houses were gone, front doors, stairs, all wood were damaged or even removed, There was no traffic at all; no cars, bicycles or trams, no pedestrians, it was deadly quiet. The former occupants had all been removed - gone. After a while I heard footsteps coming towards me. They became

(Continued on page 8)

Profile: Sam Spyer (cont)

(Continued from page 7)

louder and from the footpath on the opposite side of the street. I noticed that they were not made by ordinary shoes; they were made by heavy boots. Gradually I saw two men in uniform approaching in green uniforms. I knew what they were: *Gruene Polizi*, Green Police, (which had a bad reputation). When we were level I looked at them and said “*Guten Abend*” and they replied with the same greeting. I walked on at the same pace but my heart was bouncing in my chest. I did not look back, but heard their footsteps fading. Apparently, fortunately for me, they were not interested in me. Had they been and had they stopped and asked for my identification, I'm sure I would not be here today. I reached the hospital safely and pinned my star on again.

In March 1943 I found it necessary to go into hiding as quite a few of my colleagues had already done and, through my uncle, I was able to get in touch with that section of the underground which dealt with this. I got a new identity, Johan Driessen, and straightaway became an actor. My new role as Johan Driessen, was rejecting my former identity. I could not tell my parents about it but I'm sure my uncle did. I also got a railway ticket to Leeuwarden, the capital of the province of Friesland, a northern province, and some instruction to meet someone on the railway station there. The train trip was uneventful; I had already been out without a star some months ago. It worked out well. When I arrived in Leeuwarden a man took me on a bicycle to a rather luxurious house on one of the canals and I stayed there for about a week. Then someone else came to take me to a rather isolated house in a small village, the house of a bachelor, who worked in the local milk factory. During the working week I was all on my own and I had nothing to do. I was warned not to go to the outside loo because the neighbours or passers-by did not know this man had a guest. I had to wait til he came home and til it was dark to go to the toilet. I had a room in the loft and it had a stack of then popular weekly magazines, *Het Leeven*. I read these from top to bottom and then bottom to top. After a couple of months I found it unacceptable and asked my host to call the Underground to have a talk with them. Someone came and I told him that I was a trained farmer and that I wanted to be placed on a farm. If that could not be done, I would go back to Amsterdam. Not long after this someone came to take me to a dairy farm in the south-west corner of Friesland not far from the town of Lemmer which was in Echternerpolder. This bordered on the newly created Northeast polder, created in part of the then *Zuiderzee*, which had been dammed off during the Depression. Not far from our farm was a German post, manned by two middle-aged soldiers looking for

allied pilots who had bailed out of their damaged planes. These fellows were not all interested in anything or anyone else, such as people in hiding and I could safely talk to them in German. They did not even query the fact that my German was very good.

One day, I noticed that they had captured two pilots, obviously Americans, who had wonderful leather winter jackets. I asked the Germans, if I could get one of these, but their answer was a brief “*Nein*”. They were apparently not surprised by my request. Self-preservation encouraged me to be able to talk the local language, Friesian, which was not a dialect but a separate language. I wanted to be fluent in it, to blend in. That's why I decided to take lessons. I found – I can't remember how - an enthusiastic teacher, Dr. Kalma, who helped me to get books – which I still have, and got me on the way to speaking Friesian. The Dutch government at that time, before the war, did not allow the Friesian language to be taught in schools. It was after the war that the government allowed schools on Friesland to teach Friesian, as long as the Dutch language was taught as well. Some enlightenment! My stay at the farm was not unpleasant. We milked the cows in the paddock, when they were outside during spring summer and autumn, starting at about 4.30 am. Milking was done by hand and I was a good milker, having done a milking course, when I was an apprentice.

I went to Lemmer on pushbike to have my hair cut; it meant I could go about. It was a healthy life with plenty to eat. And there was little risk of being caught. The Germans had confiscated all radios able to receive stations from other countries and only allowed people to own a German-made radio that could only receive local stations. However, many Dutch people had expensive radios, made by Philips, Telefunken or Blaupunkt with shortwave facilities, these they did not hand in. My farmer friend had one and the family wanted to listen to programs using the short-wave facilities. My farmer had one and the family wanted to listen to the short-wave Radio Nederland and the BBC. I suggested that we would conceal the radio in a straw bale, put it amongst other bales and listen to it in the shed. That was done. I hollowed out a bale; got an old blanket to protect the radio and every day we listened to the radio. We also listened to the German/Dutch news and then worked out which one told the least lies about the war.

In 1944 the farmer's daughter and I became somewhat attached to each other and in early 1945 it must have become noticeable to the parents. They told me to leave and the underground found a place for me with a family with two sons not working anymore.

Sam Spyer, November 2011

The Year of the Dragon

The Dragon is a fascinating creature with a distinctive personality; a creature of myth and legend; a symbol of good fortune and sign of intense power.

The Oriental Dragon is regarded as a divine beast. In Eastern philosophy, the Dragon is said to be a deliverer of good fortune and a master of authority. Therefore, those people born in Dragon years are to be honoured and respected.

Years of the Dragon: Fifth in the cycle, Dragon Years follow the Rabbit and recur every twelfth year. The Chinese New Year does not fall on a specific date, so it is essential to check the calendar



to find the exact date on which each Dragon Year actually begins. Dragon years have included 1904, 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988 and 2000.

The Sign of the Dragon: The key to the Dragon's personality is that Dragons are the free spirits of the Zodiac. Dragons must be free and also uninhibited. The Dragon is a beautiful creature, colourful and flamboyant, an extroverted bundle of energy, gifted and utterly irrepressible. Everything Dragons do is on a grand scale - big ideas, ornate gestures, extreme ambitions. However, this behaviour is natural and isn't meant for show. Because they are confident, fearless in the face of challenge, they are almost inevitably successful. People born in the year of the Dragon therefore usually make it to the top.

Klaudia Hochhuth: How I came to Australia



I have a fairly academic background, Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology, Educational Science and Natural Therapies (all obtained at the University in Hamburg/Germany), but my passion is art and in particular music. I formed my own band – Klaudia-bolo – performed live and released an album.

One day, I had a phone call from New Zealand and was invited to conduct healing workshops in NZ. You can only imagine how excited I was. I travelled with a friend and was amazed and delighted about the beauty of this country – the land under the big white cloud. What I didn't expect was what lay ahead.

On a long and exhausting bus trip from Auckland to Wellington a life changing experience awaited. Wellington's weather was at its worst; rain wind and cold. My friend and I hadn't booked a hotel and we were stranded in the midst of this awful weather. The backpacker and the hotel accommodation opposite the railway station were booked out. I was nearly in tears when I begged the receptionist if we could stay somewhere. She said that there is one room left for one person and another room under the roof, but that was illegal. I stayed in the 'legal' room and my friend stayed in the 'illegal' room. What a blessing to have a place to rest and put your head on a pillow.

The next part I remember so vividly as if it were yesterday. I woke up at 2 am and felt inclined to look under my mattress. Don't get me wrong I am not weird and spooky and I didn't have a nightmare either. It was my inner voice or intuition which told me to lift the mattress. and there it was. a drivers' licence from an Australian gentleman, buried under the sheets.

Very strange I thought. I told my friend about it while we were having breakfast. He was as surprised as myself. However, his look seemed to indicate that I am a nutcase, which I profoundly denied. After arriving back in Germany I sent the licence along with a friendly letter to the owner. This was to be the beginning of my next adventure. I was invited to Australia the next time I travelled to NZ. Then the real roller coaster began and I have never regretted one minute of it.

I touched down at Melbourne airport on a sunny morning with a deep blue sky. I made my way to the bus stop to wait for the shuttle bus to Ballarat. I had a deep feeling of belonging. A lady went past and said "Hello, what a lovely morning." I broke out in tears and didn't understand what was happening to me. It certainly was not the jet lag, but the beginning of my new journey in life.

All this happened 27 years ago and I've lived in Australia since. Many traumatic experiences awaited, however my beloved parents, Edeltraud and Heinrich Hochhuth, always left the door open if I needed to return to Germany.

I went back a few times to finish some business. I could have filled buckets with my tears as I was homesick to come back to Australia, the most beautiful country, in my opinion.

I have met adorable friends and like to convey the learning experience that my life experience is that the country where you are born is not always your spiritual home. God leads us to where we are meant to be.

It has just been announced that Klaudia is one of the City of Ballarat's new Cultural Ambassadors.

Irmgard Fedulou: The Journey of my life



I was born in Germany. I immigrated to Australia with my step father, mother, three brothers and my 5 month old baby girl. I left Germany at Bremerhaven on the 14th March 1953 on the ship M.S. Anna Salen. We arrived in Melbourne at Station Pier on April 18th 1953 after a gruelling 6 week trip. However, it was an exciting trip as we sailed through the Suez Canal. I saw the Arab people on the land and they waved to us as we came through. It was very hot and it was interesting to see how the Arab people lived there and the strange clothes they wore. Luckily we had a swimming pool on board that my brothers and I put it to good use.

On the ship we were taught English. But it wasn't all work; we had lots of fun as well. The ship held dances that we all went to. When we went across the Equator there was a festival on the ship where people dressed up in fancy costumes. That was a lot of fun and we were given a certificate to commemorate this event.

On arrival at Station Pier there were a lot of people. We were happy to see land again. One of my brothers called out to the crowd "Do you have any girls here?" Someone in the crowd yelled out "Don't worry mate, there are plenty of girls here!"

At Station Pier a train took us to Bonegilla, the largest migrant camp in Victoria. It was a very long journey. I was impressed with the large open spaces and beautiful countryside. It was already dark when we stopped at Ballarat during our rail journey for some refreshments. I did not know at the time but this is where I would eventually come to live.

No-one knew what to expect when we finally arrived at Bonegilla or where we would be placed. Women and children were separated from the men and we lived in tiny one-room huts. This was only temporary until a job could be found for us. For me I had a few short term jobs until we were all reunited together in Ballarat 3 months later. This is where my new life would begin and would continue to this very day.

I was born in East Germany in a small town called Ziefenhals (which means Golden Neck) surrounded by beautiful mountains. In winter it was very cold. We had heavy snow and cold frosts. All the roofs were covered in snow and icicles. The icicles were hanging from the gutters. We would break them off and lick them just like an icy-pole.

We had to wear warm clothes. A big woollen scarf, mittens, fur boots and a heavy coat or you would get frost bitten. I grew up with three brothers and we were always outside skiing, ice-skating, having snow ball fights and sliding up and down the hills on a sled. We had the most amazing fun. Our favourite playtime was building huge snowmen. We would use buttons for its eyes, a carrot for his nose and a piece of wood for its mouth. Then my father's old hat and my mother's worn out broom would finish it off.

When the sun came out of the clouds, the snow looked like a carpet of sparkling diamonds. By the end of February the snow would begin to melt and the first flowers would appear. Snow flecks and crocus would spring up. They would push their heads up through the snow. This would let us know that spring was coming. Soon all the fields were covered with corn flowers, red poppies and white margaritas. It was like a thick carpet of purple, yellow and red. High up in the mountains you could find edelweiss (which means white gems). The flower was pure crystal white with soft velvet like petals. They were so beautiful and grew as far as the eye could see.

Winter was a wondrous time and for me was full of beauty, friendships and fun, and that is how I remember winter back home.

Cultural Differences or Language Difficulties?

It is not only the other language, but the custom; what you are used to, what you know, what you have been told or what you have experienced that forms our behaviour, habits and tradition.

Whilst I was still in Germany, my Australian friend came with me to my mother's house to celebrate my birthday. Like the years before, mum had baked a strawberry cake served with real whipped cream – mouth-watering. When we had finished the first piece my mother asked my friend: "Another piece?" My friend's eyes lit up and she answered in her best German: "Thank you". My mother tried to hide her irritation and asked me: "But you certainly want another piece?" I replied: "Sure, I do. And so does my friend. She does not know that you only say THANK YOU when you mean NO, THANK YOU." In Germany you say "thank you" only AFTER you have received it. If you want more, you say YES PLEASE.

For new arrivals these things may be worthwhile knowing. When an Australian says: "It is none of my business" that does not mean that this person is very tolerant but merely that he/she does not want to get involved, viz. "I could not care less".

When I arrived as a new immigrant from Germany I expected that everyone would speak English. But what a type of English! The pronunciation sounded very neglected and my repeated "Pardon?" was not always because of my lack of vocabulary.

I was invited to the official opening of a new private pool on a certain day; when parting I was reminded of the oncoming event with "Don't forget your **togs**". Understandably I needed a translation! On that eventful day I changed into my swimming gear and when the others saw me, a roaring laughter was their comment...unsure I asked "What is wrong?" When they finally caught their breath, they pointed at my rubber cap. In Germany you were not allowed in a public pool without it, but that has changed meanwhile.

Of course, I knew that in Australia you drive on the opposite side of the road compared to Germany. When I bought a car in Melbourne the salesman, after driving me around for a while, insisted that I drive. I did not like the idea at all. When he would not relent, I gave in and we switched seats. He told me where to go. "Don't tell me street names, just *left or right*." I heard him say: "Next left". I obeyed in switching on the indicator, which made the wipers going, and started to turn left when he reached over to the steering wheel saying something which I did not understand (probably just as well) and made me go straight ahead instead. When I inquired

what was wrong he said "That was a divided road and you were heading into oncoming traffic".

Proudly I drove my new little Mazda 323 on the freeway one day. Thinking it was the equivalent to the **Autobahn** where you can go as fast as your car allows. Soon I noticed by the reaction of the other drivers that something must be wrong. On the first opportunity I asked, "What speed is permitted?".

In passing I saw an obviously second-hand car on private property with a sign "4 Sale". I murmured: "Amazing, they have four cars for sale".

Somewhere I had to sneeze and somebody said "Gesundheit". I turned around and asked in German: "Are you German?" That person looked very confused and asked what I had said. When I repeated my question in English he said NO. Then I knew that somehow the German word for *health* had found a place in the Australian language.

Within the first year I sat for my Australian driver's license. Of course, I had studied the booklet beforehand. This was special vocabulary after all. After finishing the theoretical part he asked me to tell him what I see. He showed me a red glass and I knew he was testing me for colour blindness, "**Red**" I answered. The same happened for green and then yellow. I answered accordingly. "No" he said "this is amber". Aha, a new word. Then he showed me something which did not have a colour. My answer was "dirty". "This is white!" By then I had the giggles.

Shortly after my arrival in Australia I was invited "**for tea**". At 5 pm I rang the bell. The lady of the house stared at me "What do you want?" - "Was I not invited for tea today? Or did I get the day wrong?" - "But not at this time. My husband is not even home yet. Come back at 7pm". How embarrassing, and rude, I thought. Well, 5 o'clock tea is here at 7pm. I shall have to eat before I go again. My astonishment was complete when I returned later with a full stomach, seeing the table set for a big meal – dinner. Everyone had fun on my account.

Later in the year I was invited for Christmas Dinner and I almost missed it. Just as well. I made it a habit since the "tea-invitation" to ask "at what time am I expected, please?"



In church we had a function and people were asked to bring a plate. Well, they might not have enough for everybody. So I brought 6 plates – empty.

Brigitte Kerrutt

Congratulations Sherley

Ms Shirley Hart was re-elected as President of FAABI for the 7th consecutive year at the AGM on the 4th February 2011. Congratulations Shirley on your excellent record and all your untiring work and efforts on behalf of the Filipino/Australian Community of Ballarat. We wish you every success in your role and the challenges ahead throughout 2012.

Appeal for Typhoon Victims in the Philippines

Anyone who can assist the Filipinos who were recently devastated by the terrible typhoon in the Philippines is asked to contact Shirley Hart, President of FAABI. Donations of all kinds, including money, clothing, food items, blankets and linen, toys, etc. will be gratefully accepted.

Contact Details: Sherley Hart, Asian Groceries Shops, Howitt Street Wendouree, 3355. (Tel: 0417 331 756)



Some of the staff and volunteers take a rest at the last Multicultural Tucker.

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Soul Food is a unique monthly event held at the Art Gallery of Ballarat, providing an opportunity to relax in a tranquil environment and reflect on inspiring themes and common threads that tie us all together.

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Privacy Rights!

Have you ever wondered why an organisation is asking for your personal information?

When you need to access Victorian government services you might be asked to provide some personal information about yourself, such as your date of birth, address, financial details, education or employment history. How much information you need to provide will depend on the situation.

The *Information Privacy Act* is the law in Victoria that protects your personal information. There are rules about the way that Victorian government organisations, including local councils and some community service providers, collect and handle your personal information.

Victorian government organisations can only collect your personal information if it is necessary to do their work, for example in order for you to get your driver's licence, enrol in school, apply for a permit, or register a marriage or a birth.

All Victorian government organisations must look after your personal information; and only use and disclose your personal information for the right reasons.

You have the **RIGHT** to know why an organisation is asking for your personal information and what they are going to do with it.

You also have the right to make a complaint if you believe that the privacy rules have been broken.

Invitation to meet representatives from the Office of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner (Privacy Victoria)

Privacy Victoria offers a range of free services to communities, including culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Representatives from Privacy Victoria will attend the BRMC Members Meeting on **Tuesday 21 February 2012** to provide information about the privacy laws and your privacy rights. Further information, including privacy information in community languages, is also available at: www.privacy.vic.gov.au. You can also call our enquiry line on **1300 666 444** (Local Call) for free and confidential advice.



Hanan Noura
Diversity Officer



Art Workshops for People with a Disability

Arthur Creative - Workshop Series for artists with disability. (Includes Matchbox, Paintbox, Boxhead Ensemble and Progressive Studio). Currently engaging 30 local artists across the performance and visual arts sectors. Programs have been operating for nearly 5 years and consists of weekly workshops held in an open studio to develop original works, build up skills in the visual / performing arts sector, explore and enhance the individuals unique expressive identity and opportunity to experiment with multimodal art making techniques and performance outcomes. For full details of how to be involved visit <http://www.ian.org.au/organization-s-in-the-inclusive-arts-networks/arthur-creative-inc/programs-of-arthur-creative>

Emma Barrance Creative Director Arthur Creative Inc.

ASIC's Credit and Debt Education Campaign for newly arrived communities

The Credit Outreach Team is pleased to announce that we have now completed and published our range of educational and money management resources for humanitarian entrants to Australia. The official launch of the project will take place on 6 March in Sydney, in conjunction with DIAC.

We believe the money management content, covering 10 topics in 15 languages, each in a variety of formats - audio, video, fact-sheet and learning activities - will be of real benefit to newly arrived people.

From 6 March 2012 you will be able to download these resources (for free) from ASIC's MoneySmart website, www.moneysmart.gov.au. Please take the time to look over the online materials and we encourage you to use and promote them with other agencies and ethnic community organisations you deal with.

Over coming months ASIC will continue to promote these resources. We have training sessions organised for settlement workers in each State and Territory, as well as a range of local initiatives and speaking opportunities planned. We are encouraging organisations to put a link to our MoneySmart on their own websites. The Credit Outreach team can provide some introductory words to facilitate this happening.

If you would like to connect with the Credit Outreach team about this initiative, please contact Hannan Amin, on 03 9280 4220 or hannan.amin@asic.gov.au.

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