



## **Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council , Inc.**

ABN: 24 776 774 519

Postal Address: PO Box 1418 Bakery Hill, 3354

Office Address: Golden Point Learning & Cultural Environment  
Golden Point , Victoria, 3350

Telephone : 5332-5941

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## **Statement of Purpose:**

**To actively promote and develop goodwill, understanding and harmony within our culturally diverse community.**

## **Aims and Objectives:**

- (1) To provide opportunities for people of all backgrounds to come together .**
- (2) To provide advisory services , support and advocacy for the particular needs of people of various cultural backgrounds .**
- (3) To advocate on relevant government policy and practice at the local, state and federal level to ensure appropriate service provision.**
- (4) To provide government and other bodies or agencies in the Ballarat Region with an open channel of communication with cultural groups and organizations.**
- (5) To promote a greater awareness of multicultural values, the contribution and the specific needs of community groups within the region.**
- (6) To advise relevant agencies in the region on the social, legal cultural, educational, health and welfare needs of residents of culturally diverse background with an emphasis on equitable access to services.**
- (7) To develop programs which will encourage ethnic people of all ages within the region to retain their heritage and so optimise the benefits of cultural diversity for all Australians .**



## Chairperson's Report

Talia Barrett



### Redefining BRMC as an organisation

In the past 10 months, since the new Executive Committee of BRMC came into place, the organisation has seen many changes. Basically, one of the first steps we took was to implement a new management structure with a Chief Executive Officer at the helm. The purpose of this was to distance the Executive Committee from the day-to-day responsibility of management of BRMC and place this responsibility into the hands of a full-time knowledgeable and dedicated CEO. This decision was also endorsed by one of our funding bodies, who felt this was an essential step for BRMC. At this point, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Shigekazu Yamawaki, our CEO from December 2009 until August 2010, for helping BRMC to build positive relationships with key stakeholders within the community and re-build its reputation amongst service providers, in particular. During his time as CEO, Shigekazu developed some wonderful projects, such as initiating connections with the wine industry and creating employment opportunities for members of our refugee communities. This and other legacies remain with BRMC to further develop and expand.

A crucial partnership was also formed this year with Child & Family Services (CAFS) when we seconded two of their staff, Evie Dichiera and Shirley Liddy, to assist us with continuing implementation of the Settlement Grants Program (SGP). This relationship also enabled us to access the expertise of Marlene Butler, who also stepped into the acting CEO role. We are most grateful for the assistance provided by CAFS this year and I hope this working relationship will continue.

This year was focused on the Executive Committee taking steps to become more informed about what responsibilities we have as a governing body and undertook governance training and strategic planning. The purpose was to lead the Committee and the BRMC staff through some steps towards developing a clearer sense of the organisation's purpose and role in the community. This, in turn, led to BRMC members wishing to have their input into the development of a vision for BRMC, hence, a series of Community Consultations – led by me, as Chair, over a four month period with the nine cultural groups who chose to participate, and a number of individual members.

The **Community Consultations** were guided by a few key questions pertaining to the envisaged role of BRMC for its members and the envisaged role of BRMC for the community. Interestingly, the results of these consultations highlighted three common themes, which were voiced by most members and were also expressed by the staff and Executive Committee at the Strategic Planning sessions. The common themes that emerged from the consultations were that *BRMC should be*:

- a central contact point in Ballarat for information on multiculturalism for service providers and the community generally
- a first port of call for new arrivals to the area who are from migrant backgrounds
- an information & referral point for migrants who are seeking specific services



Some members also had some wonderful ideas about how we can promote BRMC and multiculturalism within the Ballarat community, such as: work directly with City of Ballarat to welcome new residents; create links with university & schools to promote language learning opportunities; run cultural awareness workshops on Australian culture for new arrivals & other cultures for service providers and the general community. These common ideas can be the starting point to steer BRMC's direction in 2011 and define its vision. For a detailed report on the Community Consultations, visit BRMC's website at [www.brmc.org.au](http://www.brmc.org.au) and log into the "Members" section, or contact our administrative staff for a copy of the report.

### ***Membership process***

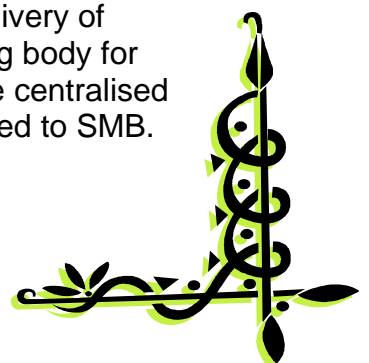
In addition to reviewing the management and vision for BRMC, some of our processes were also re-examined. Recognition must be given, at this point, to our Secretary, Liz Denny, and Assistant Secretary, Yin Toe, for working with such dedication and commitment with our Administration staff, Nenita Drough in particular, to update our membership information and overhaul our administrative processes. This review has ensured that, from application for membership to voting opportunities, members and the organisation can be quite clear on whether someone is a general or individual member, current or lapsed and so on. Thank you to the above people for finally putting a clear system in place.

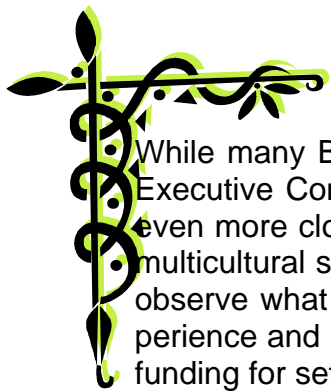
### ***Constitutional review***

Review of BRMC's constitution was also a focus this year to ensure it was in line with current tax, legal and other obligations. We outsourced the review to local legal firm, Heinz and Partners, who made some key recommendations to the Committee on what needed to be changed or updated, which the Committee endorsed. However, it would appear that the attempt to change the Constitution with BRMC members was not successful for a variety of reasons, including the fact that some members feared, unnecessarily, that changing the Constitution would mean dramatically changing what BRMC stood for and would move it completely away from its original purpose. At the same time, very few members contacted the Committee about their concerns, so their fears could never be directly addressed. This was a disappointing outcome for the Executive Committee, as it symbolised the lack of trust that has existed among some members ever since the new Committee came into being. Trust is not something that is gained easily when trying to implement change, even if it is positive. Change, by its nature, does create a sense of uncertainty and anxiety and, perhaps, it is necessary to examine carefully how change is implemented at BRMC if it is to progress as a community organisation and not stagnate.

### ***Changes to BRMC Service Delivery***

It was extremely regrettable that BRMC lost funding to its Settlement programs during this year. In 2009, another service provider in the region, Ballarat Community Health, was successful in its application to the federal government to take on delivery of settlement services to Ballarat's new arrivals. In addition, the key funding body for English language programs decided that all language delivery should be centralised and our 'very limited' funding for the Volunteer Tutor Program was diverted to SMB.





While many BRMC members are disappointed with these outcomes, and rightly so, the Executive Committee still feels these events should be seen as an opportunity to work even more closely with other service providers, rather than for BRMC to act as a 'silo' of multicultural services. In order for us to offer services that are 'best practice', we need to observe what others do and do it even better. Therefore, we have to learn from this experience and identify where we can improve. There is no reason why BRMC cannot gain funding for settlement and other programs in the future; we clearly need to do more.

### **Staffing**

This year was also a challenge in terms of considerable changes to staffing. While key staff members regrettably left the team, especially two long-serving employees, Litsa Chung and Kathryn Miller, we have also gained some wonderful people, such as Regina Bautista, Nenita Drough and Tiffany Gardiner (filling in for Jason Shorter who is on leave) who are contributing greatly to BRMC's programs, operational processes and to our community responsiveness. It should be said that our operations are nothing without the excellent staff at BRMC and, currently, we are extremely fortunate to have such a cohesive team.

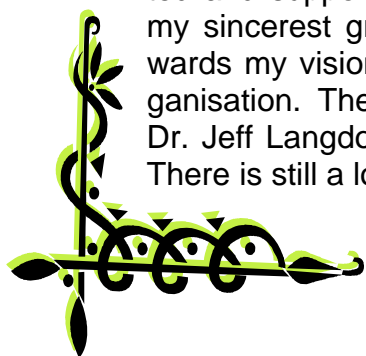
### **Community connections & contributions**

In addition to our annual involvement in the Begonia Parade, BRMC also contributed to community activities and events throughout the year, such as working in partnership with the Ballarat Indian Association during Cultural Diversity Week to run a Harmony BBQ and cricket match; promoting Community Safety Initiatives with the Victorian Police at a community meeting for the Indian community in February; celebrating Iranian New Year with a night of celebration at GPlace in March, and also providing sponsorship to a number of community events, such as the soccer match between University of Ballarat students (international & migrant) and the Victorian Police in October.

In my role as Chair, I was asked to be guest speaker for two local chapters of international women's groups, ZONTA and the International Soroptimists, who are keen to be involved in supporting our migrant women to develop a sense of place in Ballarat. Furthermore, I was fortunate to be invited to speak at the Ballarat & Western Region Leadership Program as well as the African Church Leaders' Conference. These kinds of connections and interest in BRMC can only promote and strengthen BRMC's networks and support base for the migrant communities we serve.

Another initiative that has been prompted by elders of our Sudanese and Togolese communities is the provision of Leadership and Social Enterprise training for many of our African women to be conducted this year by the Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition from Melbourne. It is hoped that the outcome will ensure empowerment, essential skill development and greater employment opportunities for Ballarat's African communities generally.

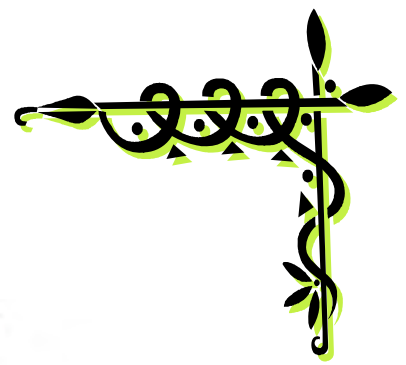
*Finally*, I wish to emphasise that the Executive Committee this year has been exceptional in its make up of such diverse and highly skilled members. Without this team of committed and supportive people, the challenges may have been too daunting. So, I express my sincerest gratitude to those people on the committee who assisted me to work towards my vision for BRMC to become a more collaborative and community-focused organisation. The Executive Committee now welcomes BRMC's new Executive Officer, Dr. Jeff Langdon, and wishes him every success in embracing the challenges to come. There is still a long journey ahead for BRMC and I wish it a bright and successful future.





# BRMC TREASURERS REPORT

## For the October 2010 AGM



### BRMC TREASURERS REPORT FOR 30th SEPTEMBER 2010

#### CASH ON HAND AND IN THE BANK

Bank Balance per the books	\$	76,467.93	
Cash at Hand	\$	1,266.35	
Investment Acct	\$	100,000.00	
Total Cash at Hand	\$	177,734.28	
Total Receivables	\$	985.00	
Total Current Assets			\$ 178,719.28
Total Payables	\$	1,056.70	
Other Current Liabilities	\$	64,840.30	
Total Current Liabilities			\$ 65,897.00
Estimated Discretionary Balance			\$112,822.28

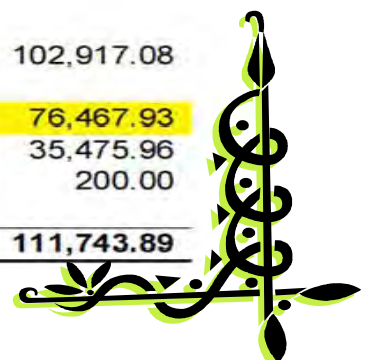
#### CASH FLOWS MONTH TO 30/9/2010

OPENING BANK BALANCE			<u>\$ 93,559.86</u>
PLUS BANK DEPOSITS	\$	85,825.15	
Chq Reversal		-	
			<u>\$ 85,825.15</u>

#### LESS CHEQUES

Wages	\$	18,650.21	
Superannuation	\$	7,385.38	
Administration	\$	13,623.55	
Rent	\$	6,600.00	
Petty Cash/Cash floats	\$	1,507.23	
Communications	\$	120.00	
Program Expenses	\$	10,506.14	
Events	\$	11,179.80	
Bank Fees	\$	69.12	
Asset Purchases	\$	-	
Audit Fees	\$	4,840.00	
Workcover & Insurance	\$	9,964.48	
Australian Tax Office	\$	12,656.57	
Legal Expenses	\$	5,814.60	
			\$ 102,917.08

Closing Balance per the Accounts	\$	76,467.93
Add Outstanding Cheques	\$	35,475.96
Less Outstanding Deposits	\$	200.00
Balance per the Bank Statement	\$	<u>111,743.89</u>





## Prospects for the Year Ahead

Financially, BRMC appears to be stronger than it actually is – it was trapped half-way through its metamorphosis from an amateur-home-based organisation to a proper corporate structure with professional staff.

In its current form, BRMC is not viable and must either complete the transition or go back to its non-professional home-based roots.

As the following budget for 2010/11 shows, BRMC is viable for only another six months, if the new Executive Officer does not bring in more funding and activities.

However, if BRMC cuts costs by turning its back on becoming a professionally run corporate not-for-profit community organisation, its current funding agencies are likely to be very unhappy.

### BRMC Comparative Income Statement for 2011 Budgeted, the Current Year and 2009

	<i>2010/11</i>	2009/10	2008/09
Revenue	\$ 326,975	<b>\$ 481,346</b>	<b>\$ 325,653</b>
Other income	57,488	<b>23,362</b>	<b>20,780</b>
Total Revenues	\$ 384,463	<b>\$ 504,708</b>	<b>\$ 346,433</b>
Employee benefits expense		<b>(372,357)</b>	<b>(223,182)</b>
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(10,496)	<b>(6,666)</b>
Program operating costs		<b>(50,605)</b>	<b>(39,600)</b>
Occupancy costs		<b>(23,353)</b>	<b>(25,513)</b>
Other expenses		<b>(72,626)</b>	<b>(50,932)</b>
Total Costs & Expenses	\$ (562,500)	<b>\$ (529,437)</b>	<b>\$ (345,893)</b>
Profit/(Loss)	<u>\$ (178,037)</u>	<b>\$ (24,729)</b>	<b>\$ 540</b>



## BRMC WOMEN'S OFFICER

Georgina L. Vagg

It gives me great pleasure to report to you as your women's officer and also on our fundraising activities for the year 2009-2010. This year I have been very busy attending several cultural functions and meeting with various organizations, and several conferences. Early in the year some Board Members attended the Multicultural Dinner at the Crown Casino in Melbourne, hosted by the Hon. John Brumby, MP. This was attended by people from Ballarat Town Hall and cultural groups all over Victoria. Bus was provided for us to go on this function. The function was very grand, beautiful food great cultural acts, truly a Night to Remember.

International Ladies Night at the Inn of Khong proved a wonderful evening. Our guest speaker was Mrs. Margaret Smith, CEO from Ms Moira Kellies Children First Foundation. Margaret gave us a very interesting talk on children who needs surgery, brought out here from poor countries. The PowerPoint presentation was received with great interest; nearly \$2,000 was raised and donated to the foundation. The money we raised helped a 19 month old boy "Ty" from Vietnam for craniofacial surgery. He is doing fine now, and I do hope to meet with him soon.

It was great to be part of Kim Romeo's Community Partners Program for the Aged. The courses went for several weeks, with great and interesting guest speakers. Wonderful group of folks representing their cultural groups everyone happy as can be. Well done Kimmie!! Lunch was always well received. Kim has decided to continue meetings once a month to keep learning what's out there. This was again a very happy learning group.

This year gala ball proved a great success held in the Greek Hellenic Hall. The décor was just stunning huge lot of work but was worth the hard work, to see the looks of guests faces. Official guests were piped into the function room, several guests came from Melbourne, Gippsland, Ballarat, guests include Mr. George Lekakis, Chairperson of VMC, Mr. Michael van Vliet, Mr. Sam Affra and wife Emme, Mayor Judy Verlin and husband Ron, Councilors and staff of City of Ballarat, Mrs. Athalie & Luigi Bazzini, Dr. Graham Dettriech, Christie Lee, Mr. & Mrs. Geoff Howard MP, Ms. Dianne McGrath, Mrs. Catherine King, MP and Mark Karlovic, BRMC Chairperson Talia Barrett.

Dancing with the Greek dancers from Melbourne proved very emotional and exciting, UB Pipe Band was also very moving, Filipino dancers also share their lovely dances with us.

Great food and music from Barry Currie & friends with lots of fun help make the evening so successful, auctions proved a lot of fun. Singapore airline pilots were guests at their first Aussie ball and had a great time.

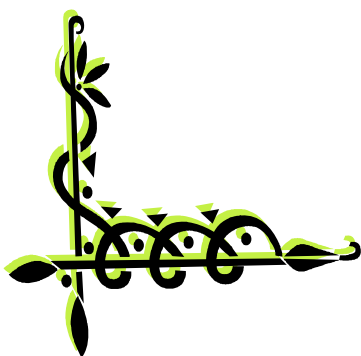


My grateful thanks to Mr. Doug Sarah, Mr. David Vendy , Mr. Frank Williams and Regina for there endless help. To all who made the tables look so beautiful, Theresa and Roman, Helen, Kim & Rosie Vagg, Stems flower for the beautiful flower arrangement and to Frank for arranging the cultural flags a, the caterer John and Gerda Faustini, Blue Pyreenees for the champagne, Leane of I Do, to Brett from Eureka Pasta a big thanks to you all. To all the sponsors and great people who donated for the auction and raffle, a big thanks to you. I am so grateful to all of you. Thank you all for the support.

On September 2 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 I have the honor to receive the award from VMC for Community Service Excellence at the government House. This is a great thrill for me to have been nominated and picked for this award. I have always been here for the cultural groups and the people and I still want to be able to attend and support more multicultural events.

Thank you all for allowing me to be your Women's Officer and Fundraising Officer; it has been a great pleasure. I wish all cultural groups a healthy, successful and a bright future. Hoping I can continue working with you again.

Georgina Vagg  
BRMC Women's Officer  
Chinese Australian Cultural Society Community Officer





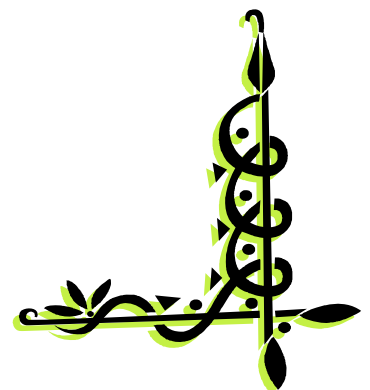


## **BRMC Publicity Officer Masako Kennedy**



One of the significant achievements in my term as Publicity Officer was publishing the bi-monthly newsletter “Your Newsletter” for the members and prospective members. These were provided to members but also distributed from the Ballarat Train station and City Library for promotion purposes. The newsletters played an important role in communication but also as a way of sharing informative articles and inspiring stories.

In addition, the renewal of the BRMC website (<http://www.brmc.org.au/>) was a significant improvement in terms of: increased accessibility, usefulness of information and ease of use. This will also continue to be improved for future use by members and visitors. Overall, I would like to thank all the members for their support to promote BRMC and its activities.





**BRMC Youth Officer**  
Mel Razmjoo



As a youth officer at BRMC my major role is to help young immigrants and refugees to interact with community and guide them through their transition. To get that achievement, I have done some activities for our community such as Nurooz "Persian New Year". It was a good chance for the community to be aware about other cultures such as Iranian cultures and I believe that via dance, food and music we can communicate easily to our community.

My next Plan is going to be "Ballarat got Talent ". The venue will be held at BRMC.

Date: Feb 2011

Age range: 15-25

Free style "All participants solo and group will be accepted"

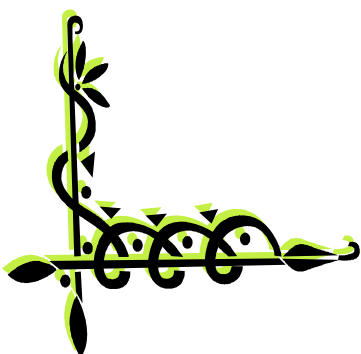
We will have three (3) judges from the University of Ballarat to judge the participants. Three participants "Group and/or solo" will be nominated for the show "Australia Got Talent", this could be their passage way to that show. On finale, we will invite one of their judges to come to Ballarat. I will explain more details at very early future.

Projected Cost: \$1000

Outcome: Interaction of young people from diverse background and showcase their talents.

It will be fun and educational.

Best regards,  
Mel



## BRMC Inc. Executive Committee 2009-2010

Data Based on File up to 05 October 2010

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position Held</b>	<b>Date of Appointment</b>	<b>Date of Resignation</b>	<b>Board Meetings Attended</b>
Talia Barrett	Chairperson	12/11/2009		<b>14</b>
Farhang Afshar	Deputy Chairperson	12/11/2009		<b>5</b>
Pam Anderson	Secretary	12/11/2009	18/02/10	<b>3</b>
Liz Denny	Assistant Secretary	12/11/2009		<b>14</b>
	Secretary	10/03/10		
Chris Wright	Treasurer	12/11/2009		<b>13</b>
Xiaoli Jiang	Assistant Treasurer	12/11/2009		<b>7</b>
Wilbert Mapombere	Interfaith Officer	16/02/10		<b>5</b>
Masako Kennedy	Publicity Officer	12/11/2009		<b>11</b>
Mehrdad Razmjoo	Youth Officer	12/11/2009		<b>8</b>
Georgina L. Vagg	Women's Officer	12/11/2009		<b>12</b>
Yin Toe	Community Representative	12/11/2009		<b>14</b>
	Assistant Secretary	10/03/10		
Khushi Maharaj	Community Representative	12/11/2009		<b>8</b>
Russ Cartledge	Community Representative	12/11/2009		<b>7</b>
Carmel Kavanagh	Community Representative	20/04/10		<b>1</b>



## **Administration Coordinator Regina Bautista**



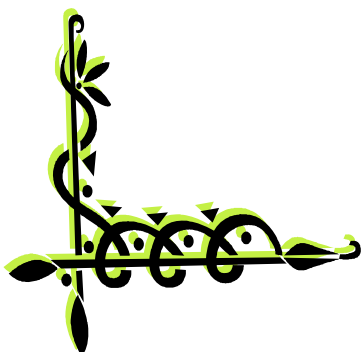
I logged on to volunteer connections and was directed to BRMC. Kathryn Miller was then in-charge of the volunteers and gave me the opportunity to help at the reception as a volunteer. When I learned what BRMC is all about, as a migrant myself I immediately realized that I had come to the right place. As I am very passionate in learning and understanding about different cultures, working at BRMC is a great way of making a difference in our community. Thanks Kathryn.

This Annual Report is a very good way of looking back on the achievements and events of the past year and an opportunity to reflect on where we are heading. For this financial year report, I am able to give my contribution to the organization by providing support to our previous CEO Shiggy Yamawaki, our Finance Manager Jenny Boag and Aileen Alder. I would like to thank them all for their support and friendship.

Behind every successful organization is a team of people working together to make it happen. BRMC has made it through the years, this will be the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Report and I can say that is a great achievement already. We may have faced a lot of challenges during the past year but I know that we can use the lessons learned to move forward and create more programs that will benefit the community. I would like to thank the Board for the trust and confidence they have given me. I can assure you that I will be working hard for the benefit of the organization and the community.

The community was able to feel BRMC through the services we provide. Without the project coordinators this would not be possible. Working with them becomes easy and fun because of their acceptance. Being a newcomer, they made me feel welcome. I would like to say thank you to Nenita, Kim, Virgie, Jason, Judy and Tiffany. Thank you also to Dawn and Dave for the help and support. I am looking forward to great projects and events with you in the coming years. I believe that together as a team we can always achieve the goal we have for BRMC. An organization with a heart, and puts the welfare of the community first.

However good a car is it will never run without fuel. BRMC was able to perform and will continue to perform because of the continued support of our funders. As part of the administration team our financial supporters can rest assured that I will perform with transparency and act in accordance with their service standards and guidelines.





## ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT REPORT

May – June 2010

**Nenita Drough**

I took on the role of Administration Assistant after serving as a Volunteer performing reception and administration duties at the BRMC Golden Point Office. During this time, I provided the assistance and support needed in the smooth running of the office administration section by providing efficient, caring and professional customer service and reception duties to all BRMC visitors; administering and maintaining office records, information and also dealing promptly to all forms of communication/correspondence received.

In performing my duties and responsibilities, the following **outcomes** were achieved:

- Visitors to the office who come for assistance with various requests e.g. tutoring, information, referral, legal help and other enquiries, were provided with efficient and professional attention and assistance. Those needing tutoring were referred to the Volunteer Tutor Program Coordinator who then contacted and worked out appropriate time, place and tutoring. Information and orientation were also given to BRMC visitors wanting to know about services and programs in the absence of coordinators. Referrals to Settlement Grant Program were done for those seeking legal assistance and more formal tutoring based on their visa status
- Office staff and members were given appropriate and practical support. Assistance was given during the Multicultural Tucker, helping out with registration of guests and receiving payment. Assistance was also given to Executive Members by providing them with the information or files they needed.
- More effective communication is achieved as emails are received, acknowledged and forwarded to appropriate recipients i.e. staff, volunteers, clients, members and CALD community. Emails received from service, community and government organizations provided staff and other recipients with information on conferences, programs, training and updates which are beneficial to staff, members and volunteers.
- Administration and maintenance of office records. Records of members and volunteers are continuously updated. All incoming and outgoing mails promptly recorded and dealt with.
- There is continuing liaison and interaction with program staff with regards to programs and services they coordinate and implement in delivering the services to BRMC clients. Being informed of their meeting and presentation schedules is very helpful to admin staff in dealing with enquiries requiring their attention. Flyers and guideline materials provided by coordinators were filed and maintained so that correct information is given out
- Support and assistance was also given to the Board/Membership in setting up for the General Meeting and preparation of the necessary forms i.e. attendance register, apology register. Meeting notices, agenda and minutes of the meetings and newsletters were sent out

I would like to acknowledge Dawn Manning and Dave Robinson for their contribution as volunteers for their continued support to BRMC administration and staff members.





## BRMC HACC Services Report

Prepared by Tiffany Gardiner  
On behalf of Jason Shorter  
BRMC HACC Cultural Diversity Project Coordinator



The Multicultural Tucker program has been very successful again this year providing a social support program targeting seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. The luncheon caters to around 100 people each time from Ballarat's Culturally and Linguistically diverse ageing community. Each month a different ethnic community group volunteers to help prepare a delicious and culturally distinct meal thus simultaneously providing culturally appropriate meals and broadening the palate and culinary awareness of our guests. Another major aspect of the program is the amount of volunteer involvement from older culturally diverse people, thus assisting them to have greater agency in the community and also the Mt Clear College students.

Besides providing the opportunity for social interaction and volunteer involvement, Multicultural Tucker also regularly hosts talks by local service providers, these talks provide an opportunity for service providers and the local CALD community to connect. Last year we have hosted Vision Australia, Alzheimer's Australia and Linkages to name a few.


This year we have made progress by:

Engaging four new community groups in the MCT. They are: a Dutch group (Ballarat's ageing Dutch community is currently engaged in establishing an incorporated community group), NESBlinks (a group of women from CALD backgrounds including Japan, China and Iran), a Togolese group and the newly emerging Thai group. There is also work underway to engage the Croatian community of Ballarat to cook in the program.

Jason has worked to ensure that the Mt Clear students have more meaningful participation in the program. This has been achieved by holding yearly briefings with the students; these briefings help students gain an understanding of the program and the people that they will be working with and helping out. It is also achieved by the coordinator's debriefing of the students at the end of each lunch program and close contact with the students' Mt Clear supervisor

The job satisfaction and team work of the MCT volunteers has been improved over the last year by holding a volunteer team building day in July of 2009 and extensive work and consultation building comprehensive volunteer policy and procedure documents that assist in supporting the team when contingencies arise. There has also been work done to engage an assistant food prep coordinator so as to lessen the load on the current food coordinator and provide a back up should they be unavailable to work on any given occasion. This measure helps to improve the resilience of the program.





Considerable work has been done on ensuring that MCT's transport program is safer. Jason has networked with Uniting Care Ballarat's transport coordinator (Jim Watkins) as well as Deb Coyle from Wimmera volunteers and Phil Whiting from Bentleigh Bayside Community Transport Program to put together a draft volunteer drivers policy. These steps include creating a medical certificate specific to volunteer drivers and arranging for drivers to see a doctor and have their fitness to drive approved by a GP according to the certificate. It has also included arranging for the drivers to be tested by an accredited driving assessor. With these measures and the continuing work on a comprehensive transport policy the MCT transport program is far less open to liability than previously.

One of the great things about the MCT program is that it brings together such a large portion of Ballarat's ageing CALD community. This makes it an excellent springboard for other activities and initiatives. Over the '09-'10 period a number of new initiatives have grown out of this program including the Chi Gong Group. Drawing from the MCT client base we now run a weekly Chi Gong group. Chi Gong is a Chinese breathing and movement exercise regime; given its extremely low impact and gentle nature it is particularly well suited to older people. Through a series of gentle exercises, participants are able to increase flexibility, strength and energy level. The group began in early February of 2010 and continues up til now. Those who participate have reported improvement in flexibility, emotional wellbeing and general quality of life. Forming this smaller group is enabling more opportunities for fellowship amongst clients and a far greater opportunity for the HACC team to gain greater insight into clients' individual situations.

Another one of this year's great success stories of the BRMC-Centacare HACC program has been the Multicultural Men's Sports Day; a day where Centacare and BRMC HACC workers coordinate with Central Highlands Sports Assembly to put on a day where over 30 CALD seniors participated in a range of activities including bocce, indoor bowls, table tennis, croquet, cards and chess. The event also included a free health check provided by Ballarat Community Health which a great number of the men volunteered for. With the enthusiasm and participation of the client group, this activity is now to become a regularly occurring event providing older CALD seniors of Ballarat the opportunity to remain socially and physically active. The success of this day rested squarely on the shoulders of the BRMC-Centacare HACC team. The Men's Health Sports Day was such a success in May that we are preparing the next one on 17 November 2010 to be held at the Ballarat Italian Association in Mt Clear.

Jason and Virgie have been working together to promote the Hepburn-Moorabool Multicultural Tucker bi-monthly bus trips which have been a huge success and growing steadily.

A large part of Jason's work has been liaising with local ethnic community groups in Ballarat to form partnerships to create greater involvement in HACC programs and a better individual and community life for the older CALD population of Ballarat.



## BRMC Staff Report Social Support /Telelink Program



Social Support /Telelink Program continues to provide support to people from diverse cultural backgrounds who are aged, have disabilities, are homebound and are culturally and geographically isolated.

The program continues to provide the friendly visiting scheme, the telephone conferencing program (Telelink), social support activities to clients who are living in the Hepburn and Moorabool area, and afternoon teas for cultural groups such as the Hungarian group.

The coordinator promotes the programs through networking with service providers, broad distribution of flyers, and work with the media. The worker coordinated the BRMC displays at Bridge Mall during the International Volunteers Day held last May 14.


The **Friendly Visiting Program** now has two Filipino clients, two Croatian and one Chinese. Unfortunately we have also lost a Filipino client and Malaysian client who have recently passed away. At present we have a Croatian and a German client waiting for a friendly visiting volunteer that speak their language.

The program continues to receive inquiries about the friendly visiting scheme from other service providers, retirement and nursing homes, and also from interested volunteers from cultural groups and schools.

The friendly visiting program is doing well and our volunteers are doing a wonderful job. The visits have made a big difference to our clients and both continue to develop good relationships.

The coordinator ensures that the friendly visiting volunteers are supported and have regular supervision. The coordinator ensures that she has regular contact with the volunteers through phone calls, e-mails and two monthly reviews.

The **Filipino Telelink Program** is doing well and continues to have the telephone conferencing every fortnight for approximately one hour. There are about eight participants who join the session. Most of the participants are culturally and geographically isolated, are carers, aged, and have a disability. The participants have developed confidence to share their interests and skills. They have built trust in each other and are open and relaxed to share some of their personal issues. They meet every now and again to have lunch together at one of the participant's homes. Each participant brings their own favorite food to share. And at times they tell stories or jokes and sometimes have a sing along.



The participants have felt that the Telelink program has helped them improve their well being and reduce isolation.

At the beginning of this year the coordinator sent an invitation to target clients from German, Italian, Dutch and Hungarian backgrounds to have a trial run on the telelink program.

Unfortunately there was very little response and interest from clients, with only one or two from each nationality who were interested to join the Telelink program. There was not enough demand to run the program for these groups.

It has been a challenge to recruit a volunteer facilitator from other cultures.

With the collaboration from the Community Partnership program the coordinator had a telephone conference with the CPP elderly volunteers in a hope that they would be able to share their experiences and assist us in promoting the Telelink program. The group found it very interesting and would like to continue the telephone conferencing at least once a month.

The coordinator continues to receive a few inquiries about the program from service providers and cultural groups.

**The Hepburn/Moorabool Multicultural Program** has been running now for more than two years. It started as a small group of clients from the Hepburn Shire having morning tea at the Daylesford Activity Centre. The program has been expanded with collaboration from the Hepburn Shire, Moorabool Shire and Centacare. The group now runs a bi-monthly luncheon with interactive activities.

There are now between 35 to 40 clients who have been attending the program regularly. We also arrange different venues to make the events more interesting.

The clients from Hepburn and Moorabool have developed a friendly relationship and always look forward to catching up with each other. They are now confident to share stories with each other. The group always has a great time and is very willing to participate in planned activities such as multicultural trivia and footy tipping.

I am very grateful of the support from my team leader Jason Shorter who is always willing to drive the bus to transport our clients. Special thanks also to Jill Spicer (Centacare Multicultural staff) who is always there to support me. My gratitude extends also to the HACC staff from Hepburn and Moorabool Shire with their input and as part of the team.

### Other Involvements

The Coordinator is involved in a number of other BRMC activities including:

- assisting the team leader Jason Shorter, in running the Multicultural Program every month and attending planning committee meetings
- supporting Centacare to run the social support bus trips for people from diverse cultures that are aged or have disabilities.

Supporting major events such as the Men's Sport Day and BRMC's Volunteers Appreciation Night in May 2010.

This is now my second year working at BRMC. It has been a busy, challenging and an enjoyable time for me. I would like to extend my gratitude to all the Multicultural clients for their participation and volunteers for their ongoing support to programs.

Social Support/Telelink Coordinator

Virgie Hocking





## Community Partners Program

**Kim Romeo**  
**Project Coordinator**



The Ballarat Intercultural Aged Connections (BIAC) Project is funded by the Australian Government **Department of Health and Ageing** under the **Community Partners Program (CPP)**.

CPP started in Ballarat in October 2009 and the objectives are:

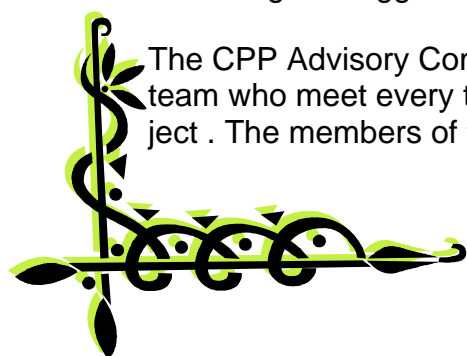
- To deliver more culturally appropriate care to older people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Communities
  - The CALD Communities to have increased access to culturally appropriate aged care support services
  - CALD Communities older generation to have greater capacity to make informed decisions about aged care support services
- Formalise arrangements that will sustain the benefits of the CPP project and its strategies and continue to promote and facilitate increased access by CALD Communities to aged care support services

The first task required the recruitment of Intercultural Facilitators to represent their cultural groups in Ballarat for a two year period. Through training at BRMC, they were requested to learn about aged care services available in Ballarat, their systems and how to approach them, then to disseminate into their own communities the knowledge and information they have learnt. The Health support services who gave their time to assist the training of the Intercultural Facilitators include Direct2care, ACAS, Linkages, Southern Cross, Ballarat District and Health, Oncall, Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre, Hospice, Breast Screen Program, Hearing Australia.

The CPP Intercultural Facilitators are:

Ugo Lolocano – Italian Senior Citizens  
John Werts, Maria Bessems, Sam Spyer – Dutch Community  
Ron Males, Brigitte Kerrutt, Klaudia Hochhutch – German / Austrian Association  
Andreas Litras, Ann Frangos – Greek Community  
Georgina Vagg – Chinese Australian Cultural Society

The CPP Advisory Committee has been established and consists of a very dedicated team who meet every two months to share their expertise to help guide the CPP project. The members of the CPP Advisory Committee are:







Member	Title	Representing
Robert Puddy (Chair)	Team Leader - Direct2Care	Access Points Demonstration Project
Kim Romeo (Minute Taker)	Ballarat Intercultural Aged Connections Project Officer	Community Partners Program
Subatra Sivamalai	Co-coordinator International & Gerontic Education - BHS	Local Community
Carita Potts	EO Ballarat Hospice Care Inc	Community Palliative Care Sector
Dawn Bowes	Coordinator - Ethel Lowe PAG	Local Community
Rhonda Owen	Best Community Development	Community Education Sector
Jill Spicer	HACC Access & Equity Office - Centacare	Community Care Sector
Leonie Mills	Community Services Team Leader - Villa Maria	Community Care Sector
Rajat Taneja	Team Leader - Linkages	Community Care Sector
Anne Manngun	Team Leader Operations & Brokerage, City of Ballarat	HACC Sector & Local Community
Frances Salenga	Coordinator, Cultural Diversity - City of Ballarat	HACC Sector

Activities that BIAC/ CPP has been involved with include:

**Culturally Responsive Elder Abuse Prevention Seminar** presented by Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria. Facilitators were Poppy Hearn from the Australian Greek Welfare Society and Gary Ferguson from Senior Rights Victoria Community Educator Officer. We were extremely lucky to be one of the two regional hosts in Victoria for this forum.


**Greek Specific Cultural Briefing** presented by Adonis Maglis from the Australian Greek Welfare Society in Brunswick on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2010. Feedback forms informed us that it was enjoyed immensely wished it had of been a longer session.

**'Coming Together'** is held the first Friday of every month at Formosa Garden Nursery in Leith Street to promote sustained relationships between Health Support Services and Cultural Communities. The Intercultural Facilitators meet to share a cup of coffee and great conversation with Health Service Providers.

**Nazareth House Tour** on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2010 started with a guided tour by Tom Saide and followed by a wonderful hot lunch. Everyone was so impressed by the wonderful atmosphere and magnificent staff at Nazareth House that they all wanted to move in, especially if they are guaranteed to receive Boris Skontra's famous Croatian pancakes!

**Multicultural Senior Citizens Forum** which will be held on the 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2010 at GPLACE. This forum in Senior's month offers the Ageing Cultural Communities free entry, free entertainment and a free lunch and access to Ballarat Health Service Providers. Over the next year, the BIAC/ CPP Project will be delivering information sessions to Cultural Groups and Cultural Briefings to Health Service Providers.

I would like to acknowledge every effort from my Intercultural Facilitators and Advisory Committee for always supporting me and the BIAC/ CPP Project. I cannot express enough how much I value you all. Thanks





## VOLUNTEER ENGLISH TUTOR PROGRAM

***BRMC's Tutor Program has been available for all our migrants who need help with English language. Our tutors usually work in the clients' homes providing important individual support. This gives the student a unique opportunity to focus on their specific needs and goals, such as language for everyday settlement needs, English for trade courses and workplace communication, assistance with study in other courses, preparation for language tests, employment, study, permanent residency and citizenship.***



The program also provides a unique and interesting volunteering experience for our tutors, through the initial training provided, ongoing English teaching workshops, access to our TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Library, meetings with the Coordinator and each other, and of course the first hand experience with our clients from other cultures.

Tutors are trained in a program designed by Adult Migrant Educational Services, with 20 new tutors recruited during the year ending June 2010. Many of our tutors are very experienced teachers and/or TESOL qualified. As new tutors come, some inevitably go as their personal circumstances change, so that tutor numbers have fluctuated around 50 during the last year.

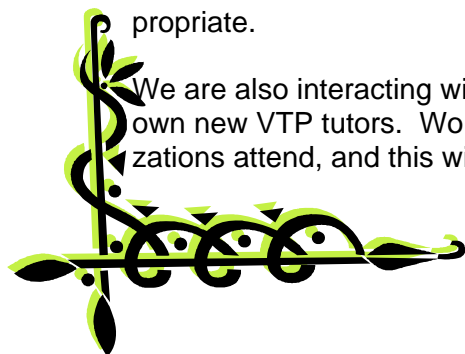
During 2010 two informal classes were provided, namely Conversation, and Reading and Writing. Following Isabel Gribble's retirement at the end of 2009, the Conversation class has been conducted by a very capable and experienced TESOL teacher, Dawn Manning. Bernard Bradbury also provided an excellent Reading & Writing class until end of Semester 1 of this year. Unfortunately Bernard has also retired from volunteering with us, but we are very grateful for the excellent service that he has provided, both the class work and individual tutoring assignments over the years.

### **CHANGES TO THE TUTOR PROGRAM DURING 2010**

The tutor program has undergone a big change during this current year, with part of the program called the Volunteer Tutor Program (VTP) being handed over to SMB, (the TAFE Campus of University of Ballarat). This occurred during July, as a result of my resignation (more or less retirement) and forthcoming changes in the Department of Immigration English Program for eligible clients (the AMEP) of which the VTP is part. The AMEP is administered by Adult Migrant Educational Services in Melbourne, and the change over was directed and overseen by that organization. This involved handing over a number of tutors and their students, however about 30 tutors and 40 Students are still being serviced by our more informal tutor program, whereby clients who are not eligible for the AMEP Volunteer Tutor Program remain with their tutors under our program.

BRMC also remains as a central focus point for our migrants requiring help with English, and are either recruited into the BRMC tutor program, or referred to SMB or other providers as appropriate.

We are also interacting with SMB, who will provide tutor training for our tutors as well as their own new VTP tutors. Workshops conducted by AMES have been arranged where both organizations attend, and this will continue, with SMB currently arranging a workshop in October.



## **Tutor Program Statistics during year 2009 – 2010**

**Total numbers during year: Students: 90 Tutors: 50**

**AMEP clients: 25% Others: 75%**

**Gender Distribution: Females 85 % Males 15 %**

### **Countries of Origin:**

**Africa: Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia 35% Togo 26%**

**China 15% India & Pakistan 4% Japan 3% Philippines 1%**

**Cambodia 1% Thailand 5% Korea 5% Middle East 5%**

### **Current Status of the Program**

Due to the loss of much of the funding for the tutor program (sourced from the Department of Immigration AMEP program) the remaining tutors and clients are being looked after on a voluntary basis, by myself, Judy Brumby, with the excellent assistance of one of our new tutors, Pam McKean, who has had many years experience working for AMES in Melbourne, as an TESOL teacher in the vocational sector of that organization. We are hoping to plan some new ventures in the coming year to further engage our tutors and clients, within the scope of our voluntary roles.

### **Acknowledgements**

During Volunteers Week in May, BRMC provided a dinner for volunteers, where all were acknowledged, and particularly a number of long term tutor volunteers who have been with the program for many years. We are indeed very indebted to all our tutors, including John Lewis, who set up and assists with our Library, so that our tutors can easily find the resources needed for their tutoring work, also Bernard and Isabel for their dedication and the provision of excellent and popular classes. Both Bernard and Isabel were founding members of the Tutor Program, and though we are sorry to lose them, BRMC and the tutor program takes this opportunity to thank Isabel and Bernard, and wish them well. We also thank other tutors who assisted in the conversation class, along with Dawn Manning, who continued providing this class during this year.

Thanks are extended to all who have helped with the program: the tutors who have worked so diligently during the year with one or more of our migrants, the class tutors, and those who have given voluntary assistance in administration work, especially during busy times this year ... and a special acknowledgement and thank you to all tutors affected during the difficult process of the handover period.

I also acknowledge the SMB staff involved in the changeover, and I am confident that the clients involved will continue to be well serviced for their individual needs within the VTP program.

***The work of all our tutors is very much appreciated, It is very satisfying to have a group of such dedicated people who enable BRMC to provide a significant service, both by providing help with English and by reaching out in friendship to many of our newcomers.***

Judy Brumby  
Volunteer Coordinator  
BRMC English Tutor Program



Social Support Group





**Community Partners Program  
Coming Together**





**Community Partners Program  
Focus Group Discussions**





## Persian Night & Gala Ball





Community Service Award



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29.08.2010



14.02.2010







# New leader heralds new start for BRMC

By Fiona Henderson

TALIA BARRETT has been elected to lead the new Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council.

Ms Barrett replaces Frank Williams, who was ruled ineligible to stand again by the returning officer due to his membership status.

Ms Barrett is the University of Ballarat's international student academic advisor, and has 17 years' experience in international education and migrant services.

"This is a new start for BRMC and a great opportunity to review all aspects of the organisation to ensure that it is seen as a current and valued resource for the communities it serves," Ms Barrett said.

"We have a combination of older and well-established mi-



**NEW ROLE:** Talia Barrett has been chosen to lead the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council. Picture: **Zhenshi van der Klooster**

grant communities and a spectrum of younger and new migrants here in Ballarat and the region.

"The needs of some of these newer communities are

changing as they become established here, and it is important for BRMC to keep up and embrace those changes."

At a meeting on November 12, a new committee of man-

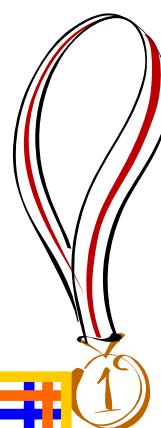
agement was installed with a range of skills in intercultural studies, economics, IT education, fundraising and community development.

Ms Barrett said a strategic review of the BRMC was to take place.

She said one positive change had been the appointment of chief executive Shigekazu Yamawaki, who contributed greatly to the organisational structure.

The new committee includes Ms Barrett, Afshar, Pam Anderson, Dennehy, Chris Wright, Jiang, Mehrdad, Masako Kennedy, Vagg, Russ Cartledge, and Khushi Maharaj.

An interfaith officer is to be announced.



BRMC, CITY AND POLICE MEET

## Diversity can be a strength

By Kim Stephens

BALLARAT has the potential to be one of Australia's most robust, culturally-diverse communities, the chairwoman of the region's multicultural organisation said yesterday.

Talia Barrett and other representatives of the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council met with police, the City of Ballarat and the Ballarat Indian Association yesterday in the wake of a recent spate of attacks on Indian taxi drivers in the city.

But Ms Barrett insisted the meeting was arranged to discuss strategies to improve the safety of all Ballarat's growing array of cultures, not just the Indian population.

"We wanted to address the anxiety levels that have been created by the hype surrounding recent events and want people to feel more secure, to ensure this kind of aggravated behaviour does not continue," she said.

"Our migrant populations are growing but we are still a young community when it comes to cultural diversity.

"We want to ensure we have programs in place when we become a larger multicultural community."

Ms Barrett said the council, police and City of Ballarat hoped to draw on other culturally diverse communities to ensure as Ballarat becomes more of a city

**"We wanted to address the anxiety levels that have been created by the hype surrounding recent events and want people to feel more secure, to ensure this kind of aggravated behaviour does not continue"**

could become renowned as a racially harmonious community.

"We are looking at creating a more accepting and respectful community and what we need to do is put measures in place so people have a much greater understanding," she said.

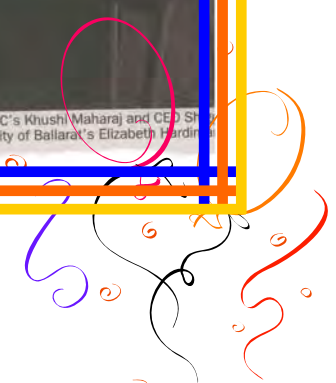
"Essentially we were discussing education programs and this idea of civic pride where we would be going into secondary schools and taking in people from other cultures to talk to students.

"Kids don't have as much exposure to other cultures as they do in some other places and it is a matter of increasing that awareness so they don't have that 'us and them' attitude.

"In years to come, we hope Ballarat will be known as a respectful and accepting city that is embracing of difference."



**SHARING IDEAS:** Police officers Peter McCormick and Gary Pilmore with BRMC's Khushi Maharaj and CED Shigekazu Yamawaki, police officer Peter Anderson and BRMC chair Talia Barrett with City of Ballarat's Elizabeth Harding. Picture: **Andrew Kelly**







**HARMONY:** Sam Wang, Masako Kennedy, Craig Walker, Mel Razmjoo and Charles Zhang at the annual Harmony Day cricket match. Picture: Jeremy Bannister

## Harmony winner in game of cricket

By Emma Brown

THE LONG arm of the law extended to bowling a few overs yesterday, when the Ballarat Police took on the multicultural community in a friendly game of 20/20 cricket.

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council's annual Harmony Day event took on a festival feel at Lake Wendouree Football Netball Club, where food was as much a priority as the match.

BRMC event organiser Shigekazu Yamawaki said the cricket day was the brainchild of Senior Sergeant

Gary Pilmore, multicultural liaison officer for Ballarat.

"(He) came up with the proposal to combine our special function and the community with sport," he said.

For his part, Sen Sgt Pilmore has been busy with the police team.

"I have been trying to encourage all our people to get involved — they are all here in their own time," he said.

"We are committed to the issues in the multicultural community and want the police to be seen to be contributing positively to safety in the community."

While Mr Yamawaki said this was the maiden event, the BRMC has plans for more in the future, but may change the focus to include soccer and even basketball.

With Indian players making up the majority of the multicultural team, Sen Sgt Pilmore was not sure about his side's chances.

"I reckon we're gonna get flogged — they've got some talent," he said.

But it was the police who claimed the perpetual shield in the end, winning by just one run, 104-103.

People & Places, page 1

FROM THE BALLARAT COURIER

# An ingredient to life

**V**OLUNTEERS are an essential ingredient of most organisations. Yin Toe, a long serving volunteer at the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council said that it was part of the Australian culture.

Mr Toe moved to Ballarat from Melbourne with his wife six years ago. On arrival they didn't know anyone from the area.

"When we first moved we asked ourselves how to make a network within Ballarat and thought it might be good idea to volunteer somewhere," he said.

By talking to different people and asking around, Mr Toe and his wife jumped on board at BRMC.

BRMC works with other community organisations to actively promote multiculturalism cultural diversity and the well-being of all migrant communities. It provides advisory services, support and advocacy for the particular needs of both older established migrant groups, plus new arrivals.

"I am the food co-ordinator and organise all of the catering for various events that we are involved in," Mr Toe said.



**HELPING OUT:** Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council volunteer Yin Toe says volunteering is part of the Australian culture.

On a monthly basis, BRMC puts on a lunch called the multicultural tucker lunch. The lunch aims to provide for pensioner-aged people with an ethnic background where they can get together and meet new people.

Mr Toe has always been involved within his community and said that he

gains great satisfaction as a volunteer. "Volunteers are everywhere and the idea of devoting your time is a very real and wonderful feeling," he said.

Mr Toe volunteers every week and sometimes up to four days each week. He is involved in more than two organisations as a volunteer

and plans to continue coming up with new ideas for the catering side of things at BRMC.

"Things don't happen without volunteers and for me and my wife, it is a great way to meet people and create friendships and connections," he said.

## What is National Volunteer Week?

NATIONAL Volunteer Week will be held from May 10 to 16.

This is the week where all of Australia is called upon to recognise our volunteers and thank them for their efforts.

Australian volunteers contribute more than 700 million hours of community service to so many areas of society, including community health care, heritage and arts, environment conservation, emergency services, education, social justice and sports.

**Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council (BRMC)** is the council for Multi and Inter cultural affairs. BRMC is a not-for-profit organization which relies on Government funding for the continuation and implementation of programs, for newly arrived and long settled immigrants in the Ballarat region.

**BRMC** relies heavily on the assistance from Volunteers. We have approximately 100 volunteers compared to a very small team of employees. Volunteers range across Administration, Tutoring English, Mentoring, Friendly Visiting, Community Facilitators and Telelink.

**BRMC** would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge all of the volunteers who assist with the day to day running of the organization. "We could not provide the services to the ones who need it without your selfless contribution, so from all staff and clients at BRMC, a very sincere Thankyou."



## Social and recreation opportunities for all

A troupe of Philippine dancers provided a highlight at a multicultural event and lunch (pictured) at the Council's Planned Activity Centre in Daylesford last week as part of the Council's Home and Community Care (HACC) Program.

The event was organised by the Council in conjunction with the Department of Human Services and the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Centre (BRMC).

BRMC offers a social support program for aged residents and people who have a disability who come from a non-English speaking background and more Multicultural events are planned to be held in the Hepburn Shire.

To enquire about the BRMC social support program phone 5332 5941.

To enquire about the Councils' HACC program including Planned Activity Groups which provide centre based

social and recreation opportunities for people in the Hepburn Shire phone 5345 8399 or email [hacc@hepburn.vic.gov.au](mailto:hacc@hepburn.vic.gov.au)



## Cultures combine for men's sports day

By Kristian Silva

SOME of Ballarat's senior community got together to promote multiculturalism and wellbeing at the Ballarat Italian Association Hall yesterday.

They were taking part in the inaugural Multicultural Men's Sports Day — an event organised by Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council (BRMC), Centacare and Central Highlands Sports Assembly.

Participants were involved in a range of games and sports, including bocce, table tennis, chess, croquet, indoor bowls and pool.

About 40 members from a



**ON THE BALL:** Guido Iacono lines up his shot, while Dante Prenc, left, and Mario Lenkic look on with interest.  
Picture: Zhenshi van der Klooster

range of ethnic community groups attended the event.

"Events like these give

men a chance to socialise and get active," BRMC's cultural diversity officer Jason

Shorter said. "The other important thing we did today was conduct health checks

for some of the men. Often this is something that a lot of older men neglect to do."



# Group offers support, friendship

by Emma Brown

**T**HE FILIPINO Telelink Group was set up in May this year to provide company and enjoyment for isolated, older people with multicultural backgrounds living in Ballarat.

Every fortnight the participants of the group are linked to each other by phone and can have group discussions in their own language.

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Telelink co-ordinator Virgie Hocking said the program improves the wellbeing of the participants by reducing their sense of isolation and loneliness.

Last October the group met up with each other at one of the participant's homes in Snake Valley for lunch.

The group links by phone every fortnight and welcomes new participants.



**YOU'RE NOT ALONE:** From left are: Bebbie Cammilleri, Connie Bonzon, Brenda McMahon, Neneta Drough and Thelma McDowell.

The BRMC is seeking new volunteers to facilitate and oversee the conversations.

The program is hoping to expand to incorporate people from other cultural groups such as Hungarian, Polish, German and Italian groups.

BRMC also runs a Friendly Visiting Scheme where a volunteer from the same culture visits an elderly or housebound person once a week.

If you would like to volunteer for either of these programs contact Virgie Hocking on 5332 5941.

## Community forum

### At a glance

**What:** Community safety forum

**Where:** Victorian Railways Institute

**When:** February 13



**FORUM:** The Ballarat Indian Association president, Khushi Maharaj (front) with Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council chairwoman Talia Barrett and CEO Shiggy Yamawaki and Ballarat police multicultural liaison officer Senior Sergeant Gary Pilmore and Sergeant Peter Anderson from Buninyong Police.



## Volunteer Tutors , Volunteers Footscray Trip & Community Partners Program with Croatian Group



18 POSJET CROEXPRESS 8. srpnja 2018.

### Djelatnice Australasko-hrvatskih društvenih usluga posjetile Hrvatsku zajednicu u Ballaratu



Franci Buljat

**BALLARAT** - Djelatnice Australasko-hrvatskih društvenih usluga (AHDU), posjetile su Hrvatsku zajednicu u Ballaratu u nedjelju, 4. srpnja s ciljem promidžbe jednog od niza programa ove organizacije. Bili se o programu pod nazivom "Community partners program" ili Program partnerstva u zajednici, za koje je Ministarstvo zdravstva i skrbi za starije dodijelilo sredstva. Australasko-hrvatskim društvenim uslugama.

Ovaj program namijenjen je starijim osobama iz naše zajednice i kroz njega im se nastoji omogućiti lakši pristup drugim organizacijama za brigu o starijim osobama.

Silvana Pavlović, voditeljica je ovog programa i zajedno s Franci Buljat, novom ravateljicom organizacije, iskoristila je posjetu Hrvatskoj zajednici u Ballaratu kako bi ih upoznala sa svime što

moraju poduzeti prije samog odlaska u starački dom. Važno je da svi zainteresirani dobiju što više informacija te da razumiju i znaju kako mogu pronaći posebne usluge. Zbog toga je izuzetno važno da takve informacije dobiju na svom materinjem jeziku.

Druženje u Ballaratu, u Hrvatskom klubu "Stjepan Radić" bilo je izuzetno uspješno zahvaljujući zalaganju velečasnog Stjepana Gnječa, čija je ovo i kuća, i predsjednika samog kluba, gospodina Benita Duke, koji je organizirao ručak, i uz velečasnog Gnječa, obavijestio sve zainteresirane.

Kroz sumo predavanje i razgovor, prisutni su imali prilike upoznati se s programom, no u isto vrijeme i podijeliti svoja razmišljanja o tome kakvi su starački domovi u Ballaratu i kakva je zapravo procedura za ulazak u iste. Individualna iskustva su razmijenjena, a posebno su se razgovorili o pojedinim starčacima domovima, kila drugdje.

Na večeru i predavanje bila je prisutna i Kim Romeo, djelatnica Regionalnog multikulturalnog vijeća u Ballaratu (Ballarat Region Multicultural Council), koja je ponudila svoju pomoć Hrvatskoj zajednici Ballarata.

Gospodin Boris Škontra bio je ljubazan i podijelio neke pojedinosti iz života zajednice u Ballaratu, a vjerujemo da iste pojedinosti donijemo od prave osobe, budući da je on među prvim Hrvatima koji se doselio u Ballarat – i to davne 1963. godine. On je vrlo aktivan član zajednice, suvjetnik je multikulturalne zajednice pri općini Ballarat, aktivan je član Rotary kluba, i već 20 godina prevodi za potrebe policije.

Broj članova mjenjao se, no sada je na balast jako malen. Gospodin Škontra izrazio je želju kako bi ipak trebalo uključiti mlađu generaciju u rad Hrvatske zajednice. Društvo "Stjepan Radić" ima i boćarsko društvo koje se već šest godina redovito natječe s talijanskim klubom. Vrlo su uspješni, valja spomenuti, i zabijali su već pet pobjeda, a prošle su godine uspjeli osvojiti prvo, drugo i treće mjesto. U Ballaratu živi, kaže dalje gospodin Škontra, oko 70 hrvatskih obitelji, no ako uključimo i okolice, Daylesford i Heddon, onda ih je negdje preko 100.

Ono što smo mogli razgovoriti na druženju je da su vrijedni, mladi ljudi i da pomažu svojemu bližnjem, a mnogo dobili već pomaže Hrvatima koji su osamljeni, stariji, i koji se teško sporazumijevaju na engleskom jeziku. U svakom slučaju djelatnice Australasko-hrvatskih društvenih usluga žele se ovim putem zahvaliti svima na gostoprimstvu.



Benito Duke i Boris Škontra



Boris Škontra i Kim Romeo



Članovi kluba pomažu pokazati trofej za boćanje







**Multicultural Tucker Lunch Program**





**Geoff Howard,  
MP  
@**

**The Multicultural  
Lunch Program**





**GPlace Official Opening**



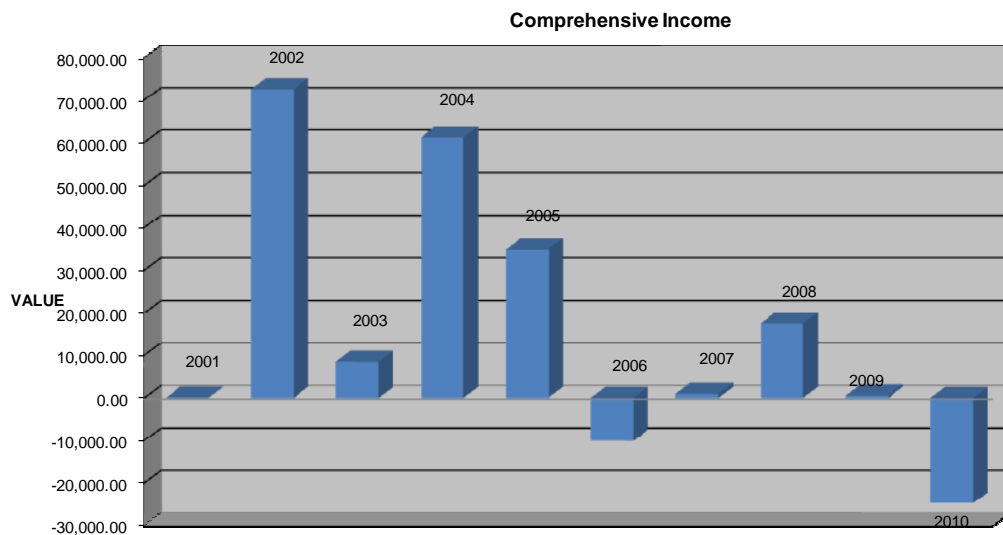
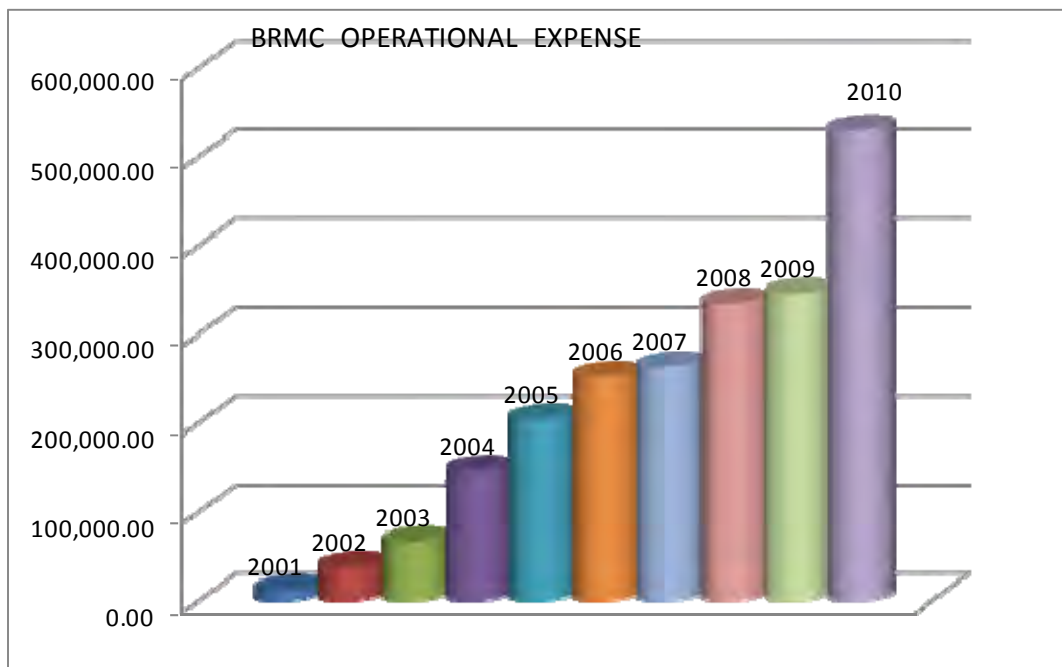
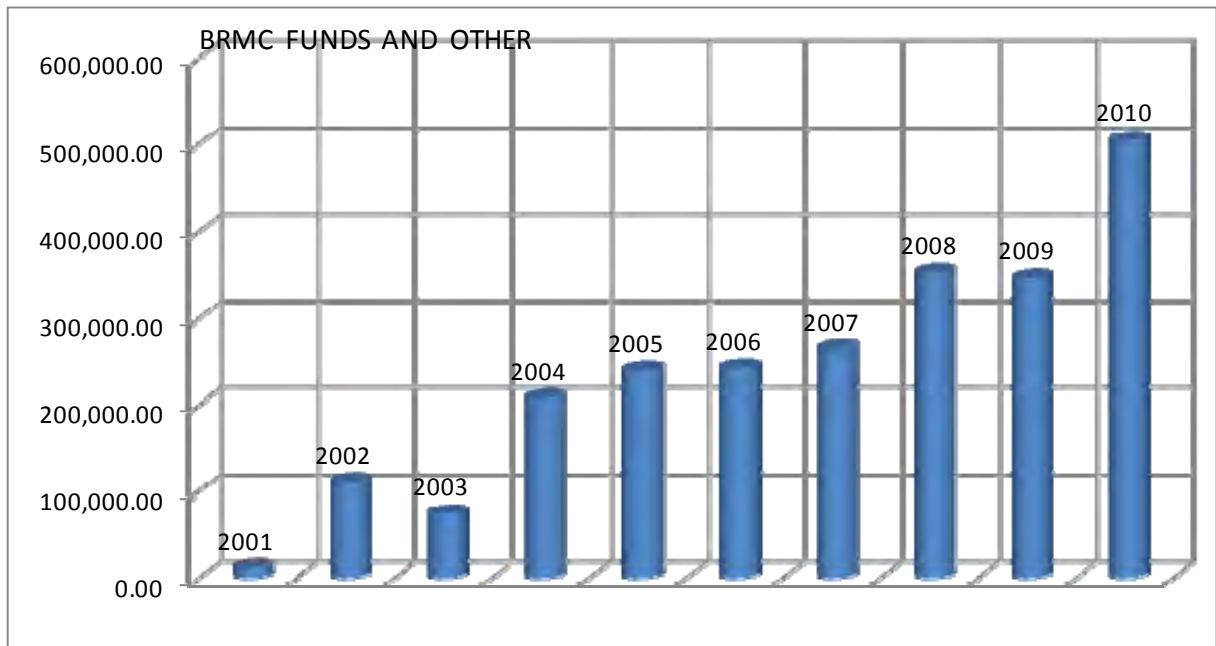
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